

A NEW
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,

FROM THE
DESCENT of the ROMANS,
TO THE
DEMISE of his late Majesty, GEORGE II.

INSCRIBED TO
His present Majesty, GEORGE III.
By WILLIAM RIDER, A. B.
Late of *Jesus College, Oxford.*

HISTORY is *philosophy teaching by examples.*
Bolingbroke from Dion. Hall.

VOL. XXXIV.

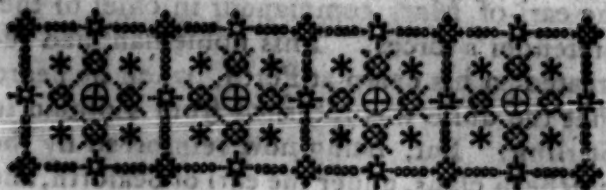
L O N D O N:
Printed for S. CROWDER and Co. in *Pater-noster-Row,*
and J. WILKIE, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard.*

A NEW
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND
FROM THE
DESCENT OF THE ROMANS

TO THE
DEATH OF THE LATE KING GEORGE II.
INSCRIBED TO
THE HONORABLE GEORGE II.
His present Majesty GEORGE III.

BY WILLIAM RIDE, A.B.
Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford
HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL
VOLUME XXIV

LONDON
Printed by S. Crowder and Co. in Pall-mall
and J. Wither in St. Paul's Church-yard
1764



THE
History of ENGLAND.



The HISTORY of GEORGE I.
continued. A. D. 1715.

THE king's forces were no less
successful in the northern than in
the southern parts of the island.
The very day, on which the re-
bels surrendered at Preston, was
remarkable for the battle of Dunblain,
fought between the duke of Argyle, and
the

4 *The History of ENGLAND.*

the earl of Mar, commander in chief of the pretender's forces. This nobleman had retreated to his camp at Perth, when he heard that the duke was returned from Lothian to Stirling. But, being now reinforced by the northern clans, under the earl of Seaforth, and those of the West, commanded by general Gordon, he determined immediately to pass the Forth, in order to join his southern friends, that they might march together into England.

With this view, he advanced to Auchterardere, where he reviewed his army, and rested on the eleventh day of November. The duke of Argyle, informed of his intention, and being joined by some regiments of dragoons from Ireland, resolved to give him battle in the neighbourhood of Dumblain. On the twelfth day of the month, he crossed the Forth at Stirling, and encamped with his left at the village of Dumblain, and his right towards Sheriff-moor. The rebels approached within two miles of his camp, and remained till day-break in order of battle; their army amounting to nine thousand effective men, cavalry as well as infantry.

In the morning, the duke, hearing they were in motion, drew up his forces, which did not exceed three thousand five hundred men,

GEORGE I.

men, on the heights to the north-east of Dumblain; but he was greatly outflanked both on the right and left. The clans that composed the center and right wing of the enemy, with their chiefs, Clanronald and Glengary, at their head, charged the left wing of the king's army, sword in hand, with such impetuosity, that, in a few minutes, both horse and foot were totally routed, with great slaughter; and general Witham, who commanded them, fled at full gallop to Stirling, where he declared that the royal army was entirely defeated.

In this, however, he was happily mistaken. The duke of Argyle, who commanded in person on the right, attacked the left of the enemy, at the head of Stair's and Evans's dragoons, and drove them two miles before him, as far as the water of Allan; though in that space they wheeled about, and endeavoured to rally ten times: so that he was obliged to push them hard, that they might not be able to recover their ranks. Brigadier Wightman followed, with three battalions of infantry, in order to support him; while the right wing of the rebels, having pursued Witham a considerable way, returned to the field of battle, and formed in the rear of Wightman, to the amount of five thousand men.

The duke of Argyle, returning from the pursuit, joined Wightman, who had faced about, and taken possession of some inclosures and mud walls, in expectation of being attacked. In this posture both armies stood fronting each other, but neither caring to renew the engagement; when, night approaching, the duke drew off towards Dumblain, and the rebels retired to Ardoch, without mutual molestation. Next day, the duke, marching back to the field of battle, carried off the wounded, with four pieces of cannon left by the enemy, and retreated to Stirling. Few prisoners were taken on either side: the enemy lost eight hundred men in the action, the king's army about two thirds of that number.

Soon after, the rebels sustained a more considerable blow, in the loss of Inverness, from which Sir John Mackenzie was driven by Simon Frazer, lord Lovat, who had hitherto adhered to the pretender's interest, but now declared in favour of the government. By this means a free communication was opened with the north of Scotland, where the earl of Sutherland had raised a strong body of vassals. The marquis of Huntley and the earl of Seaforth were obliged to abandon the rebel army, in order to secure their own territories, and, in a little

the time, submitted to the king: a good number of the Frazers, influenced by the example of their chief, lord Lovat, declared against the pretender: the marquis of Tullibardine withdrew from the army to defend his own country: and the clans, seeing no likelihood of another action, began, as usual, to return to their habitations.

The government was now in a condition to send strong reinforcements to Scotland. Six thousand men that were claimed of the States, by virtue of the treaty, arrived in England, and began their march to Edinburgh: General Cadogan set out for the same place, together with brigadier Petit and six other engineers; and a train of artillery was shipped off at the Tower, for that country, the duke of Argyle being determined to drive the earl of Mar out of Perth, in which town he had taken shelter with the remains of his army.

Mean while the pretender, notwithstanding the desperate situation of his affairs in Scotland, resolved to try his fortune in that kingdom. With this view, he posted through France in disguise, and embarking in a small vessel at Dunkirk, landed on the twenty-second day of December, at Peterhead, with six gentlemen in his retinue, one of whom was the marquis of Tinmouth, son to the duke

8 *The History of* ENGLAND.

of Berwick. He passed through Aberdeen incognito to Fetterosfe, where he was met by the earls of Mar and Marischal, and about thirty noblemen and gentlemen of distinction.

Here he was solemnly proclaimed, and assuming his pretended quality, allowed his subjects to kiss his hand; his declaration, dated at Commercy, was printed and dispersed in all parts of that neighbourhood; and here, likewise, he received addresses from the episcopal clergy, and the laity of that communion in the diocese of Aberdeen. On the fifth day of January, he made his public entry into Dundee, and on the seventh arrived at Scoon, where he seemed resolved to stay till the ceremony of his coronation should be performed. On the ninth day of January, he repaired to Perth, where he reviewed his forces, and expressed much satisfaction at the appearance of the men, and the form of the Highland dress, which he had never seen before.

In the evening he returned to Scoon, where he began to form a regular council, and to perform several acts of state. He published several proclamations: one for a general thanksgiving on account of his safe arrival; another, enjoining the ministers to pray for him in churches; a third, establish-
ing

ing the currency of foreign coin; a fourth, summoning the meeting of the convention of estates; a fifth, ordering all fencible men to repair to his standard; and a sixth, fixing the twenty-third day of January for his coronation. He made a pathetic speech in a grand council, at which all the chiefs of his party assisted. They seemed, at first, resolved to make new efforts, and with this view began to fortify Perth; but, considering that the king's army was reinforced by the Dutch auxiliaries, and that they themselves were reduced to a small number, and entirely destitute of money, arms, ammunition, and provision, they determined, at last, to abandon the enterprize.

By this time, the duke of Argyle had taken possession of Burnt-island, and transported a detachment to Fife, so as to cut off the communication of the rebels with that fertile county. On the twenty-ninth day of January, he began his march towards Dumblain, and, next evening, reached Tullibardine, where he received advice, that the pretender, and his forces, had, on the preceding day, retired towards Dundee. He forthwith took possession of Perth, and then began his march to Aberbrothick, in pursuit of the enemy.

The

10 *The History of* ENGLAND.

The pretender, being thus closely pursued, was persuaded to embark on board of a small French ship, that lay in the harbour of Montrose. He was accompanied by the earls of Mar and Melfort, the lord Drummond, lieutenant-general Bulkley, and other persons of distinction, to the number of seventeen. In order to keep clear of the English cruisers, they steered their course for Norway, and coasting along the German and Dutch shores, arrived in five days at Gravelin in France.

General Gordon, whom the pretender had left commander in chief of his forces, with the assistance of the earl Marischal, proceeded with them to Aberdeen, where he procured three vessels to sail northwards, and take on board about two hundred persons, who designed to make their escape to the continent. From Aberdeen they continued their march through Strathspey and Strathdown to the hills of Badenoch; where the common men were quietly dismissed.

This retreat was conducted with such expedition, that the duke of Argyle, with all his activity, could not overtake their rear-guard, which was composed of a thousand horse, commanded by the earl Marischal. Such was the issue of a rebellion, which, instead of weakening, served rather to strengthen the Protestant succession; and which was
hardly

hardly attended with any other effect, than that of involving the principal insurgents in utter ruin and destruction.

The parliament of Ireland, which met at Dublin on the twelfth day of November, seemed even more firmly attached, if possible, than that of England, to the present government. They passed bills for recognizing the king's title; for the security of his person and government; for setting a price upon the head of the pretender; for suppressing tumults and riotous assemblies; and for attainting the duke of Ormond. They granted the supplies without opposition. All such members as had procured addresses to the late queen in favour of Sir Constantine Phipps, then lord-chancellor of Ireland, were obliged to acknowledge their fault, and were censured as guilty of a breach of privilege.

They desired the lords justices would issue a proclamation against the Popish inhabitants of Limerick and Galway, who, presuming upon their own interpretation of the articles granted by king William, claimed an exemption from the penalties imposed by law upon other Papists. They engaged in an association to defend the king and the Protestant succession, against the pretender and all his open and secret abettors; and they resolved

82 *The History of ENGLAND.*

resolved, that whatever forces his majesty should think fit to raise for that purpose, they would enable him to defray the expence of the same.

They voted the earl of Anglesey an enemy to the king and kingdom, because he had advised the queen to break the army and prorogue the parliament, when a bill was depending to attain the pretender; and they addressed the king to remove him from his council and service: a request which was accordingly granted. The lords justices granted orders for apprehending the earls of Antrim and Westmeath, the lords Natterville, Cahir, Dillon, and other persons suspected of disaffection to the government. Then they adjourned the parliament to the eighth day of March.

The king, in his speech to the British parliament, which assembled on the ninth day of January *, said, that the zeal and affection they had shewn to his person and government, and the care and vigilance they had employed in their respective counties, for the safety of the nation, had not only answered his most sanguine expectations, but had also given him the firmest confidence, that they were now met, determined to act with

London

* A. D. 1716.

with a spirit becoming a time of danger, and with such vigour, as would end in the confusion of all those, who had openly engaged in this rebellion, and in the shame and reproach of such, as, by secret and malicious insinuations, had fomented, or, by an avowed indifference, encouraged this traiterous enterprize : that he could not omit taking this opportunity to do justice to the officers and soldiers of the army, whose brave and faithful discharge of their duty had contributed to disappoint the designs of the enemy, and to secure the safety of the nation : that he hoped the preventing the intended insurrections in some parts of the kingdom, and the defeating the attempts of those, who had taken up arms against him, would have effectually put an end to this rebellion ; but that it was certain the enemy, animated by some secret hopes of assistance, were still endeavouring to support this desperate undertaking ; and that he had reason to believe the pretender was actually landed in Scotland : that, nevertheless, it was with pleasure he could acquaint them, that, notwithstanding these intestine commotions, Great-Britain had, in some measure, recovered its influence and reputation abroad : that the treaty for settling the barrier in the Netherlands, was now fully concluded be-

14 *The History of ENGLAND:*

tween the emperor and the States-General, under his guaranty : that the king of Spain had agreed to a treaty, by which that valuable branch of the English commerce would be delivered from the new impositions and hardships, to which it was subjected by the late treaties ; and would, for the future, be established on a more certain and advantageous footing, than ever it had been in the most flourishing time of any of his predecessors : that a treaty for renewing all former alliances between Great-Britain and the States-General was nearly brought to a conclusion : that, among the many ill consequences of this rebellion, none affected him more sensibly, than that heavy burden, which it must necessarily bring upon his faithful subjects : that to ease them, however, as far as lay in his power, he would freely give up all the estates that should become forfeited to the crown, by this insurrection, to be applied towards defraying the extraordinary expence incurred on this occasion : that it was matter of great uneasiness to him, that the first years of his reign, the whole course of which he wished to have transmitted to posterity distinguished by the fair and endearing marks of peace and clemency, should be clouded and overcast by so unnatural a rebellion ; which, however impotent and unsuccessful

successful it might, by a due care, be rendered in all other respects, yet filled him with the deepest affliction, on account of those calamities, which it had brought on many of his faithful subjects, and the indispensable returns of severity, which their sufferings, and the public safety most justly required: that, under this concern, it was his greatest comfort, that he could not reproach himself with having given the least provocation to that spirit of discontent and calumny, which had been let loose against him, or the least pretence for kindling the flame of this rebellion: that those, whose fatal counsels had laid the foundation of all these mischiefs, and those, whose private resentments and animosities, disguised under false pretences, had betrayed great numbers of people to their own destruction, must answer for the miseries, in which they had involved their fellow-subjects: that he doubted not, but, by the blessing of the Almighty, and the chearsful assistance of his parliament, he should, in a short time, see this rebellion terminate, not only in restoring the tranquillity of his government, but in procuring a firm and lasting establishment of that excellent constitution in church and state, which it was so manifestly designed to subvert: and that he hoped this open and flagrant attempt

16 *The History of ENGLAND.*

in favour of Popery, would abolish all other distinctions among them, but of such as were zealous assertors of the liberties of their country, the present establishment, and the Protestant religion, and of such as were endeavouring to subject the nation to the revenge and tyranny of a Popish pretender.

Addresses of thanks were severally presented by both houses. The commons declared, they thought themselves obliged, in justice to their injured country, to prosecute, in the most rigorous and impartial manner, the authors of those destructive counsels, which had drawn down such miseries upon the nation. They began by expelling Mr. Forster from the house. They impeached the earls of Derwentwater, Nithsdale, Carnwath, and Winton; the lords Widdrington, Kenmuir, and Nairn. These noblemen being brought to the bar of the house of lords, heard the articles of impeachment read, on the tenth day of January, and were ordered to put in their answers on the sixteenth. The impeachments being lodged, the lower house ordered a bill to be brought in to continue the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act six months longer: then they prepared another to attain the marquis of Tullibardine, the earls of Mar and Linlithgow, and lord John Drummond.

On

On the twenty-fourth day of January, the king gave the royal assent to the bill for continuing the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act. He told the parliament, that, as he had reason to believe, when he last spoke to them, that the pretender was landed in Scotland, so the accounts he had received since, put it beyond all doubt, that he was heading the rebellion in that country, and assuming the title of king of these realms: that the most effectual way to put a speedy end to these troubles, would be to make such provision as might discourage any foreign power from assisting the rebels: and he therefore hoped, that every sincere Protestant, and true Briton, would look upon the extraordinary expence, which such a preparation might require, to be the best husbandry; since it would, in all probability, prevent that desolation and those calamities, which would unavoidably ensue, should the rebellion be suffered to spread, and be supported by Popish forces from abroad. Both houses assured his majesty of their inviolable duty and affection, and of their readiness to give him their utmost assistance against the daring presumption of the pretender and his adherents.

On the nineteenth day of January, all the impeached lords pleaded guilty to the articles exhibited against them, except the earl

of Winton, who petitioned for a longer time to prepare his defence. The rest received sentence of death on the ninth day of February, in a court erected in Westminster-hall, where the lord-chancellor Cowper presided, as lord-high-steward on the occasion.

The countess of Nithsdale and lady Nairn, watching an opportunity behind a window-curtain, while the king passed through the apartments of the palace, without the ceremony of a formal introduction, threw themselves on a sudden at his feet, and, with tears in their eyes, implored his mercy in behalf of their husbands. This abrupt and irregular application could not fail to surprize his majesty, and those who were with him; and therefore proved as ineffectual as some others which had been made in a more decent and becoming manner. The council resolved, that the sentence should be executed, and orders were given for that purpose to the lieutenant of the Tower, and the sheriffs of London and Middlesex.

The countess of Derwentwater, with her sister, accompanied by the dutchesses of Cleveland and Bolton, and several other ladies of the first distinction, was introduced by the dukes of Richmond and St. Albans, into the king's bed-chamber, where she implored his majesty's clemency for her unfortunate

fortunate consort. The king must certainly have been affected with these moving applications; but he probably, and, no doubt, wisely judged, that mercy to individuals, is frequently cruelty to the public. What answer the countess received, was never known to the world: it should seem, however, that it was not favourable.

She afterwards repaired to the lobby of the house of peers, attended by the ladies of the other condemned lords, and above twenty others of the same quality, and begged the intercession of the house: but no regard was paid to the petition. Next day they went to Westminster, with a still greater train than ever, and petitioned both houses of parliament. The commons rejected the suit, though only by a small majority.

From the upper house they met with a better reception. The duke of Richmond delivered a petition from the earl of Derwentwater, to whom he was nearly related, declaring that himself would oppose his solicitation. The earl of Derby expressed some compassion for the numerous family of lord Nairn. Petitions from the rest were presented by other lords, prompted by the same or the like motives.

The principal leaders of the Whig party strongly opposed their being read. The earl
of

of Nottingham thought this indulgence might be granted : his opinion had a considerable weight : the majority assented to the proposal, and agreed to an address, praying his majesty would reprieve such of the condemned lords as should deserve his mercy. To this petition, the king answered, that, on this and all other occasions, he would do what he thought most consistent with the dignity of his crown and the safety of his people. The earl of Nottingham president of the council ; his brother the earl of Aylesbury, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster ; his son lord Finch, one of the lords of the treasury ; his cousin lord Guernsey, master of the jewel office ; were, all of them, dismissed from his majesty's service,

Orders were dispatched for executing the earls Derwentwater and Nithsdale, and the viscount of Kenmuir, immediately : the others were respited to the seventh day of March. Nithsdale made his escape in women's apparel, brought to him by his mother, who went to pay him a visit on the twenty-fourth day of February. Derwentwater and Kenmuir were beheaded on Tower-Hill. The latter died a member of the church of England ; the former, of the Romish church ; both of them adhered to
their

their political principles. On the fifteenth day of March, the earl of Winton was brought to his trial, and being found guilty received sentence of death.

When the king gave his assent to the land-tax-bill, in the preamble to which the present rebellion was charged on the fatal and pernicious counsels of the late ministers, he informed both houses, that his forces had, at last, obliged the pretender to fly out of Scotland; and that he was since arrived at Gravelin in France; but he did not yet know, whether any country, in amity with England, would give him protection after having so publicly invaded this kingdom: that the dangers, to which the nation was exposed, made him determine, that neither the extraordinary rigour of the season, nor any fallacious proposals of the rebels, should divert him from using all possible endeavours towards putting a speedy and effectual end to this unnatural rebellion: that the necessary dispositions were made for raising additional forces; but as he should always consult the ease of his people, as far as was consistent with their own security, he should not make use of the confidence they had reposed in him, unless the restless malice of his enemies rendered it necessary to proceed with those levies: that he promised
him-

himself, from the zeal and wisdom of this parliament, that the future happiness and tranquillity of his subjects would be established on a solid foundation, and such measures taken, as might deprive his enemies at home of the power (since that alone could deprive them of the inclination) again to attempt the disturbance of his government.

On the seventh day of April, a commission for trying the rebels met in the court of common-pleas, when bills of high-treason were found against Mr. Forster, brigadier Mackintosh, and twenty of their confederates. Forster escaped from Newgate, and reached the continent in safety: the rest pleaded not guilty, and were allowed the space of three weeks to prepare for their trials. The judges appointed to try the rebels at Liverpool, found a considerable number guilty of high-treason. Two and twenty were executed at Preston, Wigan, and Manchester: about a thousand prisoners submitted to the king's mercy, and petitioned for transportation.

Pitts, the keeper of Newgate, being suspected of having connived at Forster's escape, was tried for his life at the Old Bailey and acquitted. Notwithstanding this prosecution, which ought to have doubled the vigilance of the jailors,

jailors, brigadier Mackintosh, and his son, Charles Wagan, James Talbot, and four other prisoners, broke from Newgate, after having mastered the keeper and turnkey, and disarmed the centinel.

The court proceeded in the trial of those that remained : a great number were found guilty, four or five were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn ; and among them William Paul, a clergyman, who, in his last speech, professed himself a sincere and true member of the church of England, but not of the revolution schismatical church, whose bishops had abandoned the king, and shamefully given up their ecclesiastical rights, by submitting to the unlawful, invalid, lay-deprivations authorized by the prince of Orange. It should seem, however, that his principles were not firmly established ; for in a petition to the king after sentence, he declared he sincerely repented of the crime for which he was condemned, and from the bottom of his heart asked pardon of God, his most sacred majesty, and his native country.

Though the rebellion was extinguished, the spirit of disaffection still continued to prevail. The Jacobites and violent Tories still harboured an implacable antipathy to the present government. Enraged by the
dis-

disappointment of their late enterprize, they exerted themselves with redoubled vigour in inflaming the jealousies and discontent of the people; and they flattered themselves, that, at the next election, which would soon arrive, they should either be able to procure a majority of their own party, or at least to raise such a ferment in the kingdom, as might lay the foundation of a new insurrection, and perhaps pave the way for a foreign invasion.

In order to prevent these dreadful calamities, the ministry resolved to obtain a repeal of the triennial act, and by a new act extend the term of parliaments to seven years.

On the tenth day of April, the duke of Devonshire, represented in the house of lords, that triennial elections served to keep up party-divisions; to raise and foment feuds in private families; to produce ruinous expences, and give occasion to the cabals and intrigues of foreign princes: that it became the wisdom of such an august assembly, to apply a remedy to an evil, which might be attended with the most dangerous consequences; especially in the present temper of the nation, while the spirit of rebellion still remained unconquered, and seemed only to wait for a fresh opportunity to display itself with more uncontrouled violence than ever: that

that as the election of a new parliament, which by the triennial act was fast approaching, was the most favourable juncture, which the Jacobites could expect, he thought it absolutely necessary to deprive them of that resource: and that for this purpose, he begged leave to propose a bill for enlarging the continuance of parliaments, and desired that the house would consent to its being read. He was seconded by the earls of Dorset and Rockingham, the duke of Argyle, the lord Townsend, and other leaders of the Whig-party. The motion was opposed by the earls of Nottingham, Abingdon, Pawlet, and by all the chiefs of the Tory-faction.

The earl of Dorset observed, that the triennial act was a new law, and an alteration of the old constitution: that, as they had by the experience of twenty years, found the many inconveniences attending that law, they ought to apply a speedy remedy: that it sowed the seeds of corruption, as was evidently apparent from this circumstance, that great numbers of persons had no other livelihood then that of being employed in bribing corporations: that of this fact the nation had lately a fatal proof, since, by those methods, the last ministry procured a parliament, which gave sanction to most of their wicked measures, and went near to

26 *The History of ENGLAND:*

surrender the trade and liberties of the nation: that triennial elections destroyed all family-interest, and subjected the constitution to the caprice of the multitude: and, in a word, that by triennial elections, the nation had but a triennial government, which was little better than no government at all.

The lord Carteret owned that frequent parliaments were the best security of the people's rights and liberties; but this bill, he said, was not against frequent sessions, but only against frequent elections: that they ought maturely to weigh what was suggested in the preamble of bill "that there was a
"restless Popish faction, designing and endeavouring to renew the rebellion with-
"in these kingdoms:" that of all rebellions this last was the most monstrous and unnatural; for all other rebellions had been carried on under pretences of liberty, whereas the professed intention of this last was to establish slavery: that with regard to our allies abroad, though he could not say they expected this bill, yet it was reasonable to suppose, they would be glad to see it pass into a law; for having found, by sad experience, that the best concerted measures might be greatly altered by different parliaments, influenced by different ministries; so if they had not some security for the performance

mance of the treaties, which his majesty was now negotiating with them, they might justly apprehend, that, by some popular ferment excited at a new election, the whole plan might be totally overturned.

The earl of Nottingham declared, that he was against the bill, because he thought it would rather exasperate than quiet the minds of the people : that it shewed a distrust of the people, and an intention of governing by fear, which, in his opinion, was the worst kind of government : that he believed no man would presume to insinuate, that his majesty had no prospect of gaining the affections of his subjects : that the king came in universally beloved, and was received with the general acclamations of his people ; and that though he could not assign the true cause of the present dissatisfaction, yet some secret cause must certainly have been given for it : that he hoped, however, the dissatisfaction of the people was not near so great as had been represented : that the rebellion was now, at length, entirely suppressed ; but, if any ferment yet remained, this bill was a very improper expedient to allay it, and would rather rivet the disaffected in their prejudices against the government, than make them change their opinion : that, with respect to foreign poten-

tates, the bill might produce an effect quite contrary to what was intended; they might be deterred from entering into any engagements with Great-Britain, when informed by the preamble to this bill, that the Popish faction was so dangerous, as to threaten destruction to the government: they would apprehend that the administration was so weak, as to want so extraordinary a provision for its safety; that the gentlemen of Britain were not to be trusted: and that the good affections of the people were restrained within the limits of the house of commons: that this bill, far from preventing the expence of elections, would rather increase it, and encourage every species of corruption; for the value of a seat would always be in proportion to the duration of a parliament; and the purchase would rise accordingly: that frequent parliaments were required by the fundamental constitution of the kingdom, ascertained in the practice of many ages: that the reasons urged for continuing this parliament for seven years, would be at least as strong, and might, by the conduct of the ministry, be made much stronger before the end of the term, for continuing, and even perpetuating their legislative power, to the absolute subversion of the third estate of the realm: and finally, that this bill

bill evidently tended to increase the power of the sovereign, by furnishing his ministers with such an excellent opportunity of corrupting the members of parliament; but that numberless instances in the English history, concurred to prove, that counsels for enlarging the prerogative, had ever been pernicious to the crown.

He was answered by the duke of Argyle, who, among other things, said, that he could, by no means, agree with the noble lord, who spoke last, either as to the origin or the conclusion of the rebellion: that, notwithstanding the artful suggestion, that the king had been received with the general acclamations of his people, it was, nevertheless, certain, that, whatever arts were used by the last ministry to blind and deceive the people, designs had been formed to bring in the pretender, long before his majesty's accession to the throne: that the disappointment of these designs was entirely owing to providence, for, had the conspirators thrown off the mask sooner, and improved the ferment which their emissaries had raised in the nation, at the last election, it was extremely probable, that their wicked designs for defeating the Protestant succession, had been rendered effectual: that he wondered, therefore, his lordship could be puzzled to find out the

cause of the present disaffection, as it plainly proceeded from the false representations of things and persons, which had been industriously spread abroad, both before and since his majesty's arrival: that, with respect to the allegation of the rebellion's being extinguished, he acknowledged, for his own part, he was of a very different opinion: that the rebels had only removed their headquarters from Perth to Paris or St. Germain; but their emissaries in Great-Britain were still as busy and insolent as ever, and waited only for a fresh opportunity to renew insurrection, and favour an invasion: that, as he was not so well read in history, as that noble lord, he would confine himself to what had happened in his own time; and he had observed, that his lordship had, by turns, opposed whatever had been offered, either for the interests of the crown, or the liberties of the people: that of this assertion, were it necessary, he could produce a number of proofs; and therefore he was not, in the least, surprized, that there appeared already so much joy, among a certain party, over a repenting sinner. Several other speeches were made on this occasion: at length, the question being put, was carried in the affirmative by a great majority.

In

In the lower house, the bill was attacked by the lords Guernsey and Finch, Mr. Shippen, Mr. Freeman, and Mr. Hungerford; and defended by Sir Richard Steele, Sir John Brownlow, Mr. Lyddal, and Mr. Hampden. Mr. Lyddal said, that if they lost this opportunity, they might possibly never find another, at least, so good a one, not only to conquer, but even to extirpate that spirit of Jacobitism, which had infected the nation, and had, more than once, brought it to the very brink of destruction: that since, therefore, they had, with so much danger and difficulty, secured their religion, laws and liberties, when all was at stake from the treachery of the late ministry, and the unaccountable proceedings of the last triennial parliament, why should they run the risk of having a new one so soon, first chosen by French money, and then voting by French directions; especially as the king and his parliament were exerting their united efforts for the good of the public, and in order to retrieve the honour of the nation? Why should they not continue longer together, that they might finish what they had so unanimously and happily begun? In fine, that the electors and people of all the boroughs in England, having for several years past, been bribed and preached into the pretender's interest, and a
dislike

dislike of the Protestant succession, it became rather a matter of necessity than choice, to apply an extraordinary remedy to such an extraordinary disease.

Mr. Hampden, from a short, but accurate review of the English history, incontestably proved, that nothing could be more false and ill-founded, than the opinion, which was commonly received, that triennial parliaments were an essential part of the English constitution. He owned indeed, that frequent meetings of parliament were to be considered in that light; but this, he affirmed, was only to be understood of frequent sessions, not of frequent elections. He then undertook to shew, that triennial parliaments had been attended with infinitely greater inconveniences than those which were called only once in seven years; that, far from checking, they served rather to encourage the spirit of venality and corruption: and that they kept the nation in a continual ferment, the space of three years not being sufficient to heal those feuds and animosities, which were occasioned by each successive election. It was alledged, he said, that the reason of reviving septennial parliaments, was, because the majority of the present parliament were Whigs; and though it was allowed, that this parliament had acted for the service of the king and the nation, the
proceed,

proceedings of the last parliament were said to be as deserving of the good opinion of his majesty, and the people, as those of the present: that, in proof of this assertion, it was urged, that the Tories granted the civil list: that, he acknowledged, was true; but he affirmed, at the same time, that, had they not granted it, the king would not have been long without it.

It was pretended, he observed, that the king was received with the universal acclamations of his people: why had that satisfaction ceased so soon? had the king done any thing to forfeit the affections of so many of his people? or had his ministers? if his ministers, why had the spirit of patriotism been so much wanting in gentlemen, as not to represent to his majesty, or to the parliament, the crimes of those whom he employed in his service? but if no real cause for these discontents had been given, either by the king or his ministers, then those, who pretended such a zeal for the king and his service at his first arrival, had acted an hypocritical part, and meant nothing less than what they now so openly professed. That they ought to consider the present situation of the minds of the people; how exasperated one set of them were at the necessary prosecution of those, who had so fatally con-
certed

certed the ruin of their country; to what a degree that restless spirit had influenced the people in the late rebellion; and how industriously a false and malicious report of the church's being in danger, had been propagated in the nation: that, from these and other symptoms of the ill temper of the nation, he thought the minds of the people by no means disposed for the business of an election, but rather for the restoration of that person, whom the deluded multitude had been taught to regard as the only rightful proprietor of the crown, and as one, who was come to deliver them from all the grievances and oppressions, under which they groaned: that the motives, which induced him to contend for the bill, were, to dispose the people to follow their occupations, by taking from them, for a time, the opportunity of distracting each other by elections; to deprive such as had the will, of the power of giving any new disturbance to the government: to prevent another rebellion, there being just as much reason to expect one this year, as there was the foregoing: to disappoint the treacherous designs of those, who had sworn to the king, and risen in arms against him, or abetted such as had: to restrain that base and abject spirit, which lately prevailed so far in the kingdom, as to approve of a most
igno-

ignominious conclusion of a successful war by so ruinous a peace: to disconcert any scheme that may have been formed by the regent of France, or by any other prince to disturb Great-Britain, at a time, when elections, or the approach of them, might have raised a ferment in the minds of the people: and to procure to the clergy an interval from politics, that they may be better able to take care of their flocks, in the manner which the scripture has prescribed. Several other arguments were advanced on both sides of the question. At last the matter being put to the vote, the bill was carried by a great majority, and soon after received the royal assent.

The public tranquillity being now re-established, the king resolved to visit his German dominions; but as he was restricted from leaving the kingdom by the act for the farther limitation of the crown, this clause was repealed in a new bill, which passed through both houses without opposition. On the twenty-sixth day of June his majesty closed the session with a speech to both houses, in which he told them, that he was highly satisfied with the proceedings of the parliament: that he hoped the wholesome and necessary laws they had made, would answer the great and important ends, which
it

it was evident, they had in view, those of defeating the designs and subduing the spirit of the disaffected, and encouraging the friends of the present establishment and the Protestant succession; from all which, he thought he might reasonably flatter himself with the prospect of a quiet and settled government: that he was confident his conduct in punishing the rebels had been such, as plainly proved, that he rather desired to lessen their number by soft and gentle means than by the rigorous execution of justice; but he was sorry to find, that the many instances of mercy, which he had shewn, had produced no other effect, than to encourage the Jacobites to renew their insults upon his authority and the laws of the kingdom, and, in a word to act with such folly and madness, as if they intended to convince the world, that they were not to be reclaimed by such methods, as were most agreeable to his own inclinations: that he doubted not, but, during the recess, they would employ their utmost endeavours to preserve the peace of the kingdom, and to discourage and suppress all manner of disorders; since, as the first scene of the late rebellion was opened and ushered in by tumults and riots, so they might be assured, that, upon whatever pretence these were raised, they would have no other tendency, than to support

port the spirit of a faction, who were always restless and unwearied in their endeavours to renew the rebellion, and to subvert the religion, laws, and liberties of their country: that he designed to make use of the approaching vacation to visit his German dominions: and that the better to provide for the security of the kingdom, he had constituted his beloved son, the prince of Wales, guardian of the realm during his absence. Such were the proceedings of the first session of this parliament, which, by its vigorous and resolute measures, established king George on the throne of Great-Britain, and blasted all the hopes of the pretender and his adherents.

It was not without cause, that the king complained of the insolent behaviour of the disaffected party. On the tenth of June, the anniversary of the pretender's birth-day, they distinguished themselves by wearing white roses. The Oxonians too, could not let slip such a favourable opportunity of displaying their principles. They broke all the windows that were illuminated in that city on the king's birth-day, as well as such as were not lighted up on the anniversary of the Restoration. They had even the insolence to attack some officers of the army who were peaceably celebrating the king's birth day; and because they met with

a deserved repulse, they drew up a remonstrance, which they presented to parliament.

About the middle of June general Macartney, who had lately returned to England, submitted to a trial for the pretended murder of the duke of Hamilton. Colonel Hamilton, who had formerly deposed, that he saw the general give the duke the wound of which he died, now departed from that declaration, and only averred, that he saw the general reach his sword over the duke's shoulder. The falsity, however, of this asseveration was sufficiently evinced by the testimony of two park-keepers, who swore, that they took up the swords, when the general and colonel ran to the assistance of the duke and lord Mohun; and that neither of the weapons were ever returned to either of the parties. The general was therefore acquitted of the murder; and was, soon after, restored to his rank in the army, and even gratified with the command of a regiment.

The titles of the duke of York and Albany, were bestowed upon the king's brother, prince Ernest, bishop of Osnaburg. The earl of Portland was created marquis of Titchfield and duke of Portland; and the duke of Devonshire constituted president of the council. These promotions were attended with unexpected disgraces. The duke of Argyle, and his brother, the earl

earl of Ilay, were deprived of all their employments. The removal of these noblemen was the more surprizing, as they had, all along, been warm advocates for the Protestant succession, had the principal hand in extinguishing the rebellion in Scotland, and were firmly attached to the present government. Wharever was the cause, certain it is, they were not only dismissed from the service; but, in order to shew that there were no hopes of their being restored, their places were disposed of; general Carpenter being appointed commander in chief of the forces in Scotland and governour of Minorca; and the duke of Montrose lord-register of Scotland, in the room of the earl of Ilay.

On the seventh day of July the king embarking at Gravesend, landed on the ninth in Holland, through which he passed incognito to Hanover; and thence set out for Pymont, to drink the waters for his health. His chief aim in going to the continent was to secure his German dominions from the king of Sweden, and Great-Britain from the designs of the Pretender. Charles was highly incensed at his Britannick majesty for having join'd in the confederacy, which deprived him of Bremen and Verden; and for having afterwards purchased these dutchies of the king of Denmark. The pretender, laying hold of this opportunity, prevailed upon

the Swede to espouse his interest, and even to form a regular design for effecting his advancement to the throne of Great-Britain.

In order to guard against such an attempt, his majesty resolved to contract alliances with foreign potentates. He knew the duke of Orleans cherished the ambition of ascending the throne of France, in case the young king, who was a sickly child, should die without issue. He was sensible, at the same time, that Philip of Spain would powerfully contest that succession, notwithstanding his renunciation; and he believed the regent would be glad of an opportunity to strengthen his interest with the maritime powers of England and Holland,

He accordingly sounded the duke on this subject, and found him eager to engage in such an association. The treaty was negotiated by general Cadogan for England, the Abbé de Bois for France, and the pensionary Heinsius for the States-General. The regent readily assented to all their demands. It was stipulated, that the pretender should be immediately removed from Avignon, to the other side of the Alps, and never be permitted to return to Lorrain or France, on any pretence whatsoever: that no refuge should be given to the rebellious subjects of either of the parties: that the treaty of Utrecht, with respect to the demolition of Dunkirk, should

should be fully executed, to the satisfaction of his Britannic majesty. The treaty contained a guaranty of all places possessed by the contracting powers; of the Protestant succession on the throne of England, as well as that of the family of Orleans to the crown of France, exclusive of the house of Anjou; and a defensive alliance, ascertaining the proportion of ships and forces to be furnished to that power, which should be disturbed by intestine commotions or foreign invasions.

This treaty was no sooner known in France than it excited great discontents among the people, who said, that the regent had sacrificed to his own ambitious views, the honour and interest of the nation. In England too, the Tories found fault with this alliance. They alledged, that the succession was sufficiently secured by the treaty of Utrecht; nor was there occasion for so many foreign troops, which, on pretence of an invasion, might be introduced for very different purposes. The king and the regent little regarded these murmurs, being firmly determined to compel the Spanish monarch to adhere to the renunciation of the French crown, which he had formerly made.

His majesty was not so successful in his endeavours to appease the king of Sweden, who refused to hearken to any proposals, until Bremen and Verden should be restored.

These the king of England resolved to keep as a fair purchase; and he took such measures as might effectually enable him to preserve the possession of his new acquisitions.

Mean while the rupture between Sweden and Hanover was extremely detrimental to the trade of England, and had well nigh exposed the kingdom to another invasion, much more formidable than that, which had so lately been defeated. The Swedish ministers at London, Paris, and the Hague, maintained a correspondence with the Jacobites of Great-Britain. A scheme was laid for Charles's landing on this island with a body of twelve thousand men, where he was to be joined by the malecontents of the united kingdom. The Swede relished the project, which flattered his vanity and revenge; nor was it disagreeable to the Czar of Muscovy, who was provoked at king George's offer to join Charles against the Russians, provided he would renounce all pretensions to the dutchies of Bremen and Verden.

His majesty having received intimation of these intrigues, returned to England about the latter end of January; and ordered colonel Blakeney, with a detachment of foot-guards, to secure count Gyllenburg, the

the Swedish ambassador, with all his papers. At the same time, Sir Jacob Banks, formerly member for Minehead, and Charles Cæsar, late treasurer of the navy, were taken into custody.

The other foreign ministers, alarmed at the seizure of the Swedish envoy, complained to the ministry of this outrage committed against the law of nations. The two secretaries, Methuen and Stanhope, wrote circular letters to them, importing, that, in a day or two, they should be made acquainted with the reasons of this extraordinary proceeding. They were generally satisfied with this intimation; but the marquis de Monteleone, the Spanish ambassador, replied, that he was extremely sorry, that no other way could be found to preserve the peace of the kingdom, than that of arresting the person of a public minister, and seizing all his papers, which were the sacred repositories of his master's secrets; and that, in whatever light these two facts might seem to be understood, they very sensibly wounded the law of nations. This, however, was a mere cavil: the law of nations can never authorize any minister to plot an invasion or insurrection in that kingdom where he resides; in such a case, every thing must yield to the grand prin-

principle of all ; the principle of self-preservation.

About the same time, baron Gortz, the Swedish residentiary in Holland, was seized with his papers at Arnheim, at the request of king George, signified to the States-General by Mr. Leathes, his minister at the Hague. The baron owned, and even boasted, that he had planned the invasion : a design, he pretended, which was justified by the conduct of king George, who had aided the princes in confederacy against the king of Sweden ; who had assisted the king of Denmark to reduce Bremen and Verden, and then purchased these dutchies of the conqueror ; and who had, in the course of this very summer, sent a squadron of ships to the Baltic, where it joined the Danes and Russians against the Swedish fleet.

When the parliament of Great-Britain met on the twentieth day of February, the king, in a speech to both houses, informed them, that he flattered himself the success, which it had pleased God to give him, in defeating the late rebellion, would have effectually secured the tranquillity of the kingdom : that, during the recess of parliament, he had not been wanting in his endeavours to improve the happy prospect, by entering into such alliances, as he judged most conducive

ductive to that desirable end; and it was with pleasure he could acquaint them, that many defects in the treaty of Utrecht, which were prejudicial to the commerce, and even dangerous to the security of Great-Britain, had been remedied by subsequent conventions, the happy consequences of which were already sufficiently apparent in the flourishing state of their trade and credit: that, by the alliances lately concluded with France and the States General, they would soon be eased of all apprehensions, from Dunkirk and Mardyke; the pretender was removed beyond the Alps; his adherents were deprived of all hopes of support and countenance from France; and even the assistance of that crown was stipulated to England, in case of necessity: that it seemed reasonable to expect, that such a situation of affairs at home and abroad would have recovered, from their delusion, all such of his subjects, as had unhappily been seduced by the craft and wickedness of desperate and ill designing men, and thereby have afforded him the opportunity, which he so earnestly desired, of following the natural bent of his own inclinations to lenity, by opening the session with an act of grace; but such was the obstinate and inveterate rancour

principle of all ; the principle of self-preservation.

About the same time, baron Gortz, the Swedish residentary in Holland, was seized with his papers at Arnheim, at the request of king George, signified to the States-General by Mr. Leathes, his minister at the Hague. The baron owned, and even boasted, that he had planned the invasion : a design, he pretended, which was justified by the conduct of king George, who had aided the princes in confederacy against the king of Sweden ; who had assisted the king of Denmark to reduce Bremen and Verden, and then purchased these dutchies of the conqueror ; and who had, in the course of this very summer, sent a squadron of ships to the Baltic, where it joined the Danes and Russians against the Swedish fleet.

When the parliament of Great-Britain met on the twentieth day of February, the king, in a speech to both houses, informed them, that he flattered himself the success, which it had pleased God to give him, in defeating the late rebellion, would have effectually secured the tranquillity of the kingdom : that, during the recess of parliament, he had not been wanting in his endeavours to improve the happy prospect, by entering into such alliances, as he judged most conducive

ductive to that desirable end; and it was with pleasure he could acquaint them, that many defects in the treaty of Utrecht, which were prejudicial to the commerce, and even dangerous to the security of Great-Britain, had been remedied by subsequent conventions, the happy consequences of which were already sufficiently apparent in the flourishing state of their trade and credit: that, by the alliances lately concluded with France and the States General, they would soon be eased of all apprehensions, from Dunkirk and Mardyke; the pretender was removed beyond the Alps; his adherents were deprived of all hopes of support and countenance from France; and even the assistance of that crown was stipulated to England, in case of necessity: that it seemed reasonable to expect, that such a situation of affairs at home and abroad would have recovered, from their delusion, all such of his subjects, as had unhappily been seduced by the craft and wickedness of desperate and ill designing men, and thereby have afforded him the opportunity, which he so earnestly desired, of following the natural bent of his own inclinations to lenity, by opening the session with an act of grace; but such was the obstinate and inveterate rancour

46. *The History of* ENGLAND.

cour of the Jacobite faction, that they had again endeavoured to animate and stir up foreign powers to disturb the peace of their native country; they would choose rather to make Britain a scene of blood and confusion, and to risk even the subjecting the kingdom to a foreign yoke, than relinquish their darling design of imposing a Popish pretender on the nation: that he had given orders for laying before them copies of the letters, which had passed between the Swedish ministers on that subject, and which contained a full account of the projected invasion: and that he promised himself, from their known zeal and affection to his person and government, that they would come to such resolutions, as would enable him to defeat all the designs of his and their enemies.

From the letters of the Swedish ministers it appeared, that a design was formed for dethroning king George, and was conducted in such a manner, as could hardly fail of success. Artful papers were published to foment and encrease the discontents of the people: the present tranquillity, enjoyed in Britain, was to be used as a pretence for obtaining a reduction of the national troops, and the dismissal of the foreign forces: ships, hired in different ports, were to be as-

assembled at Gottenburgh by the end of March, when the eastern winds usually blow: on board of these a body of eight thousand Swedish foot and four thousand horse were to be embarked, with artillery, arms, and ammunition for fifteen thousand more: money was advanced by the Jacobites in Britain for defraying the expence of this armament: and the whole party held themselves in readiness to rise on the first notice. All these preparations, however, were happily rendered useless by the timely discovery of the plot.

Loyal addresses were presented to his majesty by the two houses of parliament, the convocation, the dissenting ministers, and the university of Cambridge. The lords congratulated the king on having, by his late treaty with France and the States-General, recovered, in a great measure, those advantages, which might have been expected from a glorious and successful war, but were basely given up by a treacherous and dishonourable peace; and expressed their horror and indignation at the malice and ingratitude of those who had again endeavoured to embroil their country in blood and confusion. The address of the commons ran in the same strain.

The

48 *The History of ENGLAND.*

The convocation, among other things, said, they had seen, in the late declarations of some of these men, (meaning the Non-jurors) who, nevertheless, called them Protestants, what they must look for, should ever a Popish prince be placed upon the throne of Great-Britain: that, while these men allowed to the established clergy no better a character than that of schismatics and heretics, of men cut off from the communion of Christ's church, and all hopes of salvation; what could be expected from professed Papists, who, whatever the Non-jurors might imagine, accounted no better of them than they did of the established clergy, but that both of them should be involved in one common and undistinguished ruin.

The dissenters declared, they thought it their peculiar honour, that their strict adherence to the illustrious house of Hanover, before his majesty's accession, and their loyalty to it ever since, had drawn upon them so much of the fury and resentment of their fellow-subjects: that they were not conscious of any thing else that could expose them to this calamity; their principles being, as they apprehended, the most friendly to mankind, and amounting to no more than a general toleration to all peaceable subjects: that they neither expected nor desired any thing, that
ought

ought to give the least disturbance to those of the established church; they only wished, that, under his majesty, as the common father of all his loyal people, those of their persuasion might not want the capacity, as, they hoped, his majesty should find, they never wanted the inclination, to promote the true interest of the Protestant religion, and the real welfare of their country.

The university of Cambridge, among other expressions of loyalty, acknowledged the king to be their only rightful and lawful sovereign. But the Oxonians, it should seem, were of a different opinion. At a meeting of the vice-chancellor, and heads of that university, a motion was made for an address to the king on the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion; his majesty's safe return; and the favour lately shewn to the university, in omitting, at their request, the ceremony of burning in effigy the devil, the pope, the pretender, the duke of Ormond, the earl of Mar, and others, on the anniversary of his majesty's accession.

The motion was opposed by the high flying Tories, who said, that the rebellion had been long suppressed: that there would be no end of addresses, should one be presented every time his majesty returned from his German dominions: that the late favour they

had received, was overbalanced by a whole regiment of dragoons quartered upon them : and that there was no precedent for addressing a king upon his return from his German dominions. These arguments, however frivolous, and even some of them invidious, were sufficient to influence the majority, and the motion was accordingly dropped.

They alledged, that no regard had been paid to their remonstrance touching the riot raised in that city, by the soldiers there quartered, on pretence that the anniversary of the prince's birth-day had not been celebrated with the usual rejoicings. Affidavits had been sent up to the council, both by the magistrates and the officers of the regiment. When the house of lords deliberated upon the state of the army, some of the Tory peers complained of their licentious behaviour at Oxford ; and moved, that an inquiry should be made into the late riot. The more sensible noblemen of that party opposed the motion, conscious that such a scrutiny would turn out very little to the honour of the university. But the Whig lords insisted on the matter's being examined ; and an address was accordingly presented to the king, desiring, that the papers relating to the tumult might be laid before the house. These being perused, were

were found to be recriminations between the Oxonians and the officers of the regiment.

A warm debate ensued, in the course of which the archbishop of York, the bishops of Rochester and Chester, the duke of Bucks, the earl of Abingdon, the lords Harcourt, Trevor, and North and Grey, endeavoured to justify the university, by alledging, that, for forty years past, they had not celebrated the birth-day of any prince of Wales, or even of the prince upon the throne, by public rejoicings: that the university had a method of expressing their loyalty, more consistent with the dignity of their founders, and the gravity of their own characters, than by illuminations, bonfires, and firing of guns: that, in regard to the mayor and magistrates of Oxford, they had this to plead in their excuse, that they were ignorant it was the prince's birth-day: and that it appeared plainly, from their affidavits, that the riotous proceedings were occasioned by the insolence and rude behaviour of the soldiers, encouraged by several members of the university, who called themselves "The Constitution club;" and by the neglect of the commanding officers of the regiment, in not issuing proper orders to suppress the disturbance.

These allegations were entirely refuted by the lord-chancellor, the duke of Kingston, the earl of Sunderland, the lords Coningsby, Parker, Townsend, and Cadogan, who affirmed, that the conduct of the university had been very different from what it had been represented: that, in the reigns of Charles the second, and James the second, they had expressed their loyalty in a most extraordinary manner, and had made such large advances towards countenancing an unlimited power in the prince, that, if providence had not miraculously interposed, they would, as far as in them lay, have destroyed the liberties of their country: that the disrespect they had shewn to the prince regent was manifest, inasmuch as the major of the regiment had, about ten in the morning, gone to the mayor, and complained of his not having paid any regard to the day, by ringing of the bells; to which complaint the mayor returned a shuffling answer, importing, that he did not know it to be the prince regent's birth-day: that, upon this, the major told him, that he would draw out the regiment, to celebrate the day with proper rejoicings, which he accordingly did; but that the mayor, instead of joining him in the festivity, blocked up the streets with a vast croud of people, some of whom insulted

ed

ed the soldiers on their march, and gave them opprobrious language, exclaiming several times, "down with the roundheads:" that they proceeded so far in their insults, as to throw dirt and stones at the soldiers, and even attempted to disarm some of them: and, in a word, that all the other allegations contained in the affidavits of the officers, seemed equally well-founded.

During the debate, the earl of Abingdon offered a petition from the vice chancellor of the university, and the mayor and magistrates of Oxford, praying to be heard. To this it was answered, that, as the house was in a grand committee, it was irregular to receive any petitions. In order to obviate this objection, a motion was made, that the chairman should have the chair; but this was likewise carried in the negative.

The debate was accordingly resumed, and the house agreed to the following resolutions: that the heads of the university, and the mayor of the city neglected to make public rejoicings on the prince's birth-day: that the officers having met to celebrate the day, the house in which they were, was assaulted, and the windows broken by the rabble: that this assault was the beginning and occasion of the riots which ensued: that the conduct of the major seemed well justified by the affi-

54 *The History of ENGLAND.*

debits produced on his part: that the printing and publishing the depositions, upon which the complaints relating to the riots at Oxford were founded, while that matter was under the examination of the lords of the committee of the council, was irregular, disrespectful to his royal highness, and tending to sedition.

The commons, taking into consideration the state of the nation, passed a bill, prohibiting all commerce with Sweden; a branch of trade, which, however valuable to the English merchants, was willingly sacrificed by the people in general, who were highly incensed at the plot formed by the Swedish ministers. The house voted ten thousand men for the service of the ensuing year; granted near a million for the maintenance of guards, garrisons, and land forces; and passed the bill relating to mutiny and desertion, by which the soldiers were exempted from arrest for debts. They likewise voted twenty-seven thousand pounds for the payment of four battalions of Munster, and two of Saxe-Gotha, which the king had taken into his service, to supply the place of such, as, during the rebellion, might be drawn from the garrisons of the States-General, to the assistance of England. For raising the supplies

supplies they allotted a land-tax of three shillings in the pound, and the malt-tax.

As the sums voted by the commons were not deemed sufficient for the expences of the year, Mr. secretary Stanhope brought a message from his majesty, demanding an extraordinary supply, that he might be the better enabled to secure his kingdoms against the danger with which they were threatened from Sweden; and he moved that a supply should be granted to his majesty for this purpose. This unexpected message gave occasion to a violent debate. Mr. Shippen said, it was a great misfortune, that so wise and excellent a prince as his majesty, was as little acquainted with the methods and forms of parliamentary proceedings, as with the language of the country: that, if he had known either, he would not have sent such a message, which he was sure, was unparliamentary and unprecedented; and appeared to have been penned by some foreign minister, and then translated into English: that, since the king's happy accession to the throne, they had often been told, that his majesty had retrieved the honour and reputation of the nation; a truth, which manifestly appeared in the flourishing condition of trade; but that the reasons urged for granting this supply, seemed to be inconsistent

sistent with those glorious advantages, which his majesty had obtained for his people : and finally, that he could not help being of opinion, that, if the new alliances to be contracted, were such, as could only be obtained by subsidies, the nation would never be secured by such measures ; for, whenever foreigners began to taste the sweets of English money, they would adhere to the interest of Great-Britain no longer, than his majesty should continue to supply their necessities.

Mr. Hungerford, who spoke on the same side of the question, declared, that, for his part, he could not understand what occasion there was for new alliances ; much less, that they should be purchased with money : and that it must needs be very surprizing to the whole world, that a nation so lately the terror of France and Spain, should now seem to fear so inconsiderable an enemy as the king of Sweden ; especially while the nation had so good a fleet at sea, and so great an army at land.

Mr. Stanhope said, that he was sorry to hear gentlemen grow so warm upon a subject of this nature : that the king was a prince of such integrity and honour, and had already given such convincing proofs of his tender care for the true interest of the nation, that they might safely rely upon his wisdom

wisdom in this matter: and therefore he was of opinion, that the message would be opposed by none, but such as either were not the king's friends, or else suspected the honesty of his ministers,

This imprudent reflection gave great offence to several members, particularly to Mr. Lawson, who replied, that he was surprized to hear such unguarded expressions fall from that worthy and honourable gentleman, for whom, he was sure, the whole house had a very great regard; but that, since he had thought fit to express himself so openly, he hoped he might well be justified in saying, that, if every member of that house, who used freedom of speech on any subject of debate, and happened not to fall in with the views of the ministers, must be accounted an enemy to the king, he knew not any service they were capable of performing to their country in parliament: and therefore he conceived, they had nothing else to do, but to retire to their country-seats, and leave the king and his ministers to take what they pleased.

The motion was supported by Mr. Boscawen, Mr. Horace Walpole, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, and others: but some of the Whigs spoke against it; and Mr. Robert Walpole, was silent. The speaker, and Mr. Smith, one of the tellers of the exchequer,

quer, observed, that though they were willing to grant a supply, they yet disapproved of this unparliamentary method of demanding it. The former proposed, that part of the army should be disbanded, and the money, thereby saved, applied towards making good such new engagements, as were deemed necessary to be contracted. But the danger and imprudence of such an expedient was sufficiently demonstrated by general Mordaunt and others. After several successive debates, the resolution for a supply was carried by a majority of four voices.

From the strong opposition to this measure it evidently appeared, that the ministry was divided within itself. Lord Townsend had been deprived of the office of secretary of state, by the intrigues of the earl of Sunderland; and he was now dismissed from the place of lord lieutenant of Ireland, which he had obtained upon his removal from the former. Mr. Robert Walpole resigned his posts of first commissioner of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer; and his example was followed by Mr. Methuen, secretary of state, and Mr. Pulteney, secretary at war,

When the affair of the supply was resumed in the house of commons, Mr. Stanhope moved, that the sum of two hundred and
fifty

fifty thousand pounds should be granted to his majesty for enabling him to make good such engagements as he might think proper to contract. Mr. Pulteney observed, that, if he had not yet said any thing upon this subject, the reason was, that he thought it inconsistent with decency to oppose a motion, which came from the court, while he had the honour to be his majesty's immediate servant; but that having resigned his place, he might now act with the freedom becoming an Englishman: that he disapproved of the manner of granting the supply, as unparliamentary and unprecedented: that he could not possibly persuade himself, that any Englishman advised his majesty to send such a message; but he doubted not, but the resolution of a British parliament would make a German ministry tremble. He was seconded by the lord Finch, who alledged, that the measures, which were now pursued, were likely to engage the nation in a quarrel with the Czar of Muscovy,

Mr. Stanhope made a speech, in which he vindicated the king and his ministers both with regard to the Czar and the king of Sweden. With respect to the former, he observed, that the coldness, which had of late appeared between the king and the Czar, proceeded from his majesty's refusing
to

to guaranty that monarch's conquests, and from his pressing him to withdraw his troops from the dutchy of Mecklenburg: that, with regard to the first particular, his majesty's conduct deserved the applause and thanks of a British parliament, inasmuch as it shewed, that he was cautious not to engage the nation in foreign quarrels: that this, indeed, had been his principal care ever since his happy accession to the throne; and he could now take upon him to assure them, that Great-Britain was entirely free from any engagements, and at full liberty to follow such measures, as might best suit her interest: that, with relation to the instances, which his majesty had made to the Czar to procure a removal of the Russian troops from the dutchy of Mecklenburg, he had acted in that matter, as an elector and prince of the empire: that he was persuaded all the members of that honourable house would agree with him in admitting, that his majesty's character, as king of Great-Britain, was never understood to tie up his hands with respect to his interests in Germany: that, besides, he must desire them to remember, that, long before his majesty's accession to the crown, Great-Britain was engaged in strict union with the emperor and empire; and therefore if, by virtue of an-
tient

cient alliances, the emperor should require Great Britain to make those instances with the Ozar, which the king had made only as elector of Hanover, the English could not refuse to comply with his request: that, with regard to Sweden, the king's conduct was not only blameless and irreproachable, but even worthy of the highest praise: that, in the reign of the late queen, Great-Britain had interposed her mediation to procure a neutrality in the north, by which the king of Sweden might have preserved his possessions in the empire: that the regency of Sweden agreed to this expedient; but his Swedish majesty rejected it with disdain, declaring he would consider all those as his enemies, who should pretend to restrict him to such a neutrality: that, during the whole course of that negotiation, the king, then elector of Hanover, had employed all his good offices in favour of Sweden; but that these having been rendered ineffectual by the obstinacy of his Swedish majesty; and the king of Denmark having, by the fortune of war, reconquered the dutchies of Bremen and Verden, his majesty, as elector of Hanover, had purchased these territories with his own money at a very high price: that, although it was never his majesty's intention to engage Great-Britain in a war to support

these acquisitions; yet, if gentlemen would take the trouble to cast their eyes upon the map, and examine the situation of Bremen and Verden, he hoped they would not deem it a matter of indifference, who was possessor of those two dutchies, but would agree with him in thinking, that their being in the hands of his majesty was more conducive to the interest of Great-Britain, than if they were in the hands either of the Czar, who already gave but too much jealousy to the empire, or in those of the king of Sweden, who had endeavoured to excite a rebellion in Britain, and continued to harbour the English rebels.

This vindication was deemed satisfactory by most of the members. Nevertheless Mr. Smith thought proper to make a kind of reply. He said, that as he did not pretend to be thoroughly acquainted with the foreign concerns of the nation, he would not undertake to refute the allegations of the secretary; but that if an estimate of the conduct of the ministry in relation to affairs abroad was to be made by a comparison of their conduct at home, they would not appear altogether so faultless as they were represented. "Was it not a mistake," added he, "not to preserve the peace at home, after the king had ascended the throne with

“ with the universal applause and joyful ac-
“ clamations of all his subjects? Was it
“ not a mistake, upon the breaking out of
“ the rebellion, not to issue a proclamation,
“ to offer pardon to such as should return
“ home peaceably, according to the custom
“ on former occasions of the same nature?
“ Was it not a mistake, after the suppress-
“ sion of the rebellion, and the trial and
“ execution of the principal authors of it,
“ to keep up animosities and drive people
“ to despair, by not passing an act of in-
“ demnity; by keeping so many persons
“ in hard and tedious confinement; and by
“ granting freedoms to some, without leav-
“ ing them any means to subsist? Is it not a
“ mistake, not to trust to a vote of parlia-
“ ment for the making good such engage-
“ ments as his majesty shall think proper to
“ enter into; and, instead of that, to insist
“ on the granting this supply in such an ex-
“ traordinary manner? Is it not a mistake,
“ to take this opportunity to create divisions,
“ and render some of the king’s best friends
“ suspected and obnoxious? Is it not a mis-
“ take, in short, to form parties and cabals,
“ in order to bring in a bill to repeal the act
“ against occasional conformity?”

These objections were answered by Mr.
Barington Shute, who, among other things,

observed, that his majesty, indeed, was received with the universal applause of all his subjects; but that it was evident, from the succeeding events, that the joy, expressed by some of them was by no means sincere: that the rebellion, which afterwards broke out was owing, not to the ill conduct of the ministry, but the inveterate prejudices of those, who, rather than not impose a Popish pretender on the nation, would willingly have sacrificed the liberties, civil and religious, of their country; and that he was surprized to see a gentleman, who, he was sure, condemned that rebellion as much as any member of the house, endeavour to vindicate the rebels by throwing the blame upon those who were entirely innocent: that his majesty, it was owned, immediately after his accession, had made several changes in the ministry; but, in all these he had followed the rules of prudence, justice, and gratitude, inasmuch as he had advanced those, who, in the worst of times, had given undoubted proofs of their affection and attachment to his interest, in the room of such, as had been preferred, in the last reign, as the fittest instruments to destroy the Protestant succession, even before it took place, and had since been engaged in open rebellion against his majesty: that as to the
other

other mistakes charged upon the ministry, they might be reduced to these two; the not passing an act of indemnity; and the design to repeal the bill against occasional conformity: that, with respect to the first, men were divided in their sentiments about it; and considering the restless spirit of the discontented party, it was hard to determine, whether an indemnity was the best way to reclaim them, inasmuch as it was notorious, that the repeated instances of clemency, which his majesty had shewn since his accession, had been abused and despised: that touching the repeal of the act against the dissenters, nothing, in his opinion, was either more just or reasonable; and he could not but wonder, that a gentleman, who had been turned out of his employment in the last reign, and restored to it in the present, should account it a mistake to give ease and satisfaction to the undoubted friends of his majesty.

Several gentlemen, it seems, had had some private meetings in order to concert measures for procuring a repeal of the occasional bill; and it was to these meetings that Mr. Smith alluded, when he talked of parties and cabals. Mr. Shute was seconded by Mr. Stanhope, who observed, that though he had the honour to serve his ma-

jesty ever since his accession to the throne; yet, as there were several persons, who had a greater share than himself in the administration of affairs, he would leave it to them to justify their own conduct; but that, nevertheless, he would clear up a principal point, by assuring the house, that he had, some time ago, received the king's orders to draw up an act of indemnity. After a long debate it was carried by a considerable majority, that the sum demanded should be granted to his majesty.

The ministry now underwent an almost total revolution. The earl of Sunderland and Mr. Addison were appointed secretaries of state: Mr. Stanhope became first commissioner of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer: Mr. Craggs was declared secretary at war: the earl of Berkley was constituted first commissioner of the admiralty, in the room of the earl of Orford, who resigned: the duke of Bolton obtained the government of Ireland; and was succeeded in the post of lord-chamberlain by the duke of Newcastle: the duke of Devonshire resigned his place of president of the council.

On the sixth day of May, the king going to the house of peers, informed the parliament, in a short speech, that the fleet under Sir George Byng, which had sailed to the Baltic to observe the motions of the Swedes,

was

was safely arrived in the Sound ; an event, which, he hoped, would effectually secure the kingdom against any immediate danger of an invasion : that this likewise afforded him an opportunity of making a considerable reduction in his land-forces ; an opportunity which he embraced with the greatest pleasure, having established it as a rule with himself, to consult, in every thing, the ease of his people, as far as was consistent with their safety ; and, for his own part, as he should always place his greatness in the prosperity of his subjects, so should he ever desire that his power might be founded in their affections : that, for these reasons, he had given orders for the speedy disbanding of ten thousand men : that he had likewise given directions to prepare an act of grace, and, however this favour might be received by those who were obstinately bent upon the ruin of their country, he flattered himself it would raise a due sense of gratitude in all such, as had been artfully misled into treasonable practices against his person and government, and preserve them from standing in need of the like mercy for the future, when such an instance of clemency might not be so consistent with the public welfare, as it would be agreeable to his own inclinations : that he hoped they would take proper measures for reducing the public debts, with a just regard

gard to parliamentary credit ; and go on to finish the public business with all possible dispatch and unanimity.

Some steps had already been taken towards a reduction of the national debt, which was comprehended under the two heads of redeemable and irredeemable incumbrances. The first had been contracted with a redeemable interest ; and these the public had a right to discharge : the others consisted of long and short annuities, granted for a greater or lesser number of years, which could not be altered without the consent of the proprietors. Mr. Robert Walpole, when at the head of the treasury, had projected a scheme for lessening the interest, and paying the capital of these national debts. He proposed, in the house of commons, to reduce the interest of redeemable funds, and offer an alternative to the proprietors of annuities.

His plan was approved ; but, when he resigned his places, the new ministers thought proper to make some alterations in it, with which he was by no means satisfied. In the course of the debate on this subject, some warm altercation passed between him and Mr. Stanhope, from which it appeared, that they had made a practice of selling places and reversions.

Mr.

Mr. Hungerford standing up, said, he was sorry to see two such great men running foul of one another; that, however, they ought still to be looked upon as patriots, and fathers of their country; and since they had, by mischance, discovered their nakedness, the other members ought, according to the custom of the east, to cover it by turning their backs upon them. Mr. Boscawen moved, that the house would lay their commands upon them, that no farther notice should be taken of what had passed. He was seconded by Mr. Methuen: the house approved of the motion; and the speaker took their word and honour, that they should not prosecute their resentment.

The Bank and South-sea company having agreed to provide money for such creditors as should be willing to receive their principal and interest, the house came to the following resolutions: that all the public funds redeemable by law, which do not exceed five pounds *per cent. per annum* should be redeemed, according to their respective provisoes or clauses of redemption, contained in the acts of parliament for that purpose, or (with the consent of the proprietors) should be converted into an interest or annuity, not exceeding five pounds *per cent. per annum*, redeemable by parliament: that his majesty should

should be enabled to borrow of any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, such sum or sums of money, as should be requisite to redeem the said redeemable funds, at any rate not exceeding five pounds *per cent. per annum*, or to secure the same upon the funds so to be redeemed: that the annuity of one hundred and six thousand, five hundred and one pounds, thirteen shillings and five pence, payable to the governor and company of the Bank, out of the window-tax, by virtue of several acts of parliament in that behalf, for the principal sum of one million, five hundred and seventy-five thousand, twenty-seven pounds, seventeen shillings, and ten pence half-penny by them advanced, should be redeemed, or (by consent of the said governor and company) be converted into an interest or annuity, not exceeding five pounds *per cent.* redeemable by parliament: that so much of the fund, commonly called the Aggregate fund, settled by an act of parliament in the first year of his present majesty, as is applicable to the interest, circulation, exchanging, or cancelling the present exchequer-bills, should also be redeemed: that his majesty should be enabled to authorize the high-treasurer, or the commissioners of the treasury, for the time being, to treat and agree with any person or persons, bodies

dies politic or corporate, for circulating such a number of exchequer bills, at a rate not exceeding four pounds ten shillings *per cent. per annum*, for interest, exchange, and circulation, as might be charged and secured upon that part of the Aggregate fund so to be redeemed: that the annuities of six hundred thousand pounds, and eight thousand pounds, payable to the governor and company of merchants of England, trading to the South-sea, should likewise be redeemed: that the annuities payable by an act of parliament of the twelfth year of the reign of king William the third, to certain patentees therein named, their heirs and assignees, out of the weekly sum of three thousand seven hundred pounds charged on the excise, should also be redeemed: that the several terms of years remaining on the duties appropriated by the two lottery acts, passed in the ninth year of the reign of her late majesty queen Anne, and by the two lottery acts, passed in the tenth year of her said late majesty, should be made perpetual: that the said duties comprehended in the said four lottery acts, should be made one fund for the future: that the proprietors of the orders, grounded on the said lottery acts, should, within a limited time, make their election, either to accept annuities after the rate of five pounds *per cent.*

cent. per annum, redeemable by parliament, out of such general fund, or to be paid so much as remained due to them upon their orders respectively: that, in all cases where the proprietors should choose to have their principal, the five *per cent. per annum* thereby saved, should be established as another fund, towards answering such sums of money as should be advanced (for discharging the principal) by loans, or such other securities as should be thought proper: that his majesty should be enabled to give power for receiving voluntary subscriptions from any person or persons, intitled to any of the annuities issuing out of the public funds, for the residue of the respective terms of 99, 96, 89, or 32 years formerly purchased therein (not being subject to redemption), who should be willing to accept, in 'ieu thereof, perpetual annuities redeemable by parliament, and to agree to some other regulations mentioned in the resolution of the house: that all savings, which should arise upon any of the present funds by the proposed redemption, and reduction, should, after all deficiencies, that might happen upon any of the said funds, were made good, be reserved and applied, towards discharging and reducing the national debt: and that all the said duties now in being, or to be continued, should

should immediately cease and determine, after the said national debt should be discharged and paid off. On these resolutions were founded the three bills that passed into laws, under the names of "The South-sea act, the Bank-act, and the general-fund-act."

The original stock of the South-sea company did not exceed nine millions four hundred and seventy one thousand three hundred and twenty-five pounds; but, as the funds granted were sufficient to answer the interest of ten millions at six per cent. the company made up that sum to the government, for which they received an interest or annuity of six hundred thousand pounds, and eight thousand pounds a year for management. By this act they declared themselves willing to receive an annuity of five hundred thousand, and eight thousand pounds a year for management. It was enacted, that the company should continue a corporation, until the redemption of their annuity, towards which not less than a million should be paid at a time. They were likewise required to advance a sum not exceeding two millions towards discharging the principal and interest, due on the four lottery funds of the ninth and tenth years of queen Anne.

74. *The History of* ENGLAND.

By the Bank-act the governour and company declared themselves willing to accept an annuity of eighty-eight thousand seven hundred and fifty-one pounds, seven shillings, and ten-pence half-penny, or the principal of one million, seven hundred, and seventy-five thousand, twenty-seven pounds, thirteen shillings and ten-pence half-penny, in lieu of the present annuity, amounting to one hundred and six thousand five hundred and one pounds, thirteen shillings, and five-pence. They likewise declared themselves willing to discharge, and deliver up to be cancelled, as many exchequer-bills as amounted to two millions, and to accept of an annuity of one hundred thousand pounds, being after the rate of five per cent, redeemable after one year's notice; to circulate the remaining exchequer-bills at three per cent. and one penny per day. It was enacted, that the former allowances should be continued to the ensuing Christmas; after which, the bank should have for circulating the two millions five hundred and sixty-one thousand twenty-five pounds remaining exchequer-bills, an annuity of seventy-six thousand eight hundred and thirty pounds fifteen shillings, at the rate of three pounds per cent, till redeemed, over and above the one penny per day for interest. By the same act the bank was required

quired to advance a sum not exceeding two millions five hundred thousand pounds, towards discharging the national debt, if wanted, on condition that they should have five pounds per cent. for as much as they should advance, redeemable by parliament.

The general-fund act recited the several acts of parliament, for establishing the four lotteries in the ninth and tenth years of the late queen, mentioned the terms of years for which these revenues were granted, and stated the annual produce of the several funds, amounting in all to seven hundred twenty-four thousand eight hundred forty-nine pounds, six shillings, and ten-pence half-penny. This was the general fund; the deficiency of which was to be made good annually, out of the first aids granted by parliament. For the regular payment of all such annuities as should be made payable by this act, it was ordained, that all the duties and revenues mentioned therein, should continue for ever; with the proviso, however, that the revenues rendered by this act perpetual, should be subject to redemption. This act contained a clause, by which the sinking fund was established. The reduction of interest to five per cent. producing a surplus or excess upon the appropriated funds, it was enacted that all the monies arising from time to time, as well from the

surplus by virtue of the acts for redeeming the funds of the bank and of the South-sea company, as also from the surplus of the duties and revenues by this act appropriated to make good the general fund, and the overplus monies of the said general fund, should be appropriated and employed for the discharging the principal and interest of such national debts as were incurred before the twenty fifth of December of the preceding year, in such manner as should be ordered or appointed by any future act of parliament, to be discharged out of the same, and for none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever.

The earl of Oxford had now been confined almost two years in the Tower: and finding the session likely to come to an end, without taking his case into consideration, he presented a petition to the house of lords, praying, that his imprisonment might not be indefinite. Some of the Tory lords affirmed, that the impeachment was determined and destroyed by the prorogation of parliament, which superseded the whole proceeding; but the contrary was voted by a great majority.

The thirteenth day of June was fixed for the trial; and the house of commons made acquainted with this resolution. The commons appointed a committee to inquire into the
the

the state of the earl's impeachment; and, in consequence of their report, sent a message to the lords, demanding longer time to prepare for the trial. Accordingly the day was prolonged to the twenty-fourth day of June; and the commons appointed a committee, with four other members, to be the managers for making good the articles of impeachment.

At the time appointed, the peers repaired to the court in Westminster-Hall, where the chancellor, lord Cowper, presided as lord high-steward. The commons were present as a committee of the whole house: the king, the rest of the royal family, and the foreign ministers, assisted at the solemnity: the earl of Oxford was brought from the Tower, preceded by the gentleman-jailor, who carried the axe, and stood with it at the bar on the left hand of the prisoner, with the edge turned from him.

The articles of impeachment, being read, with the earl's answer, and the replication of the commons, Mr. Hampden made a long speech by way of introduction. Then Sir Joseph Jekyll stood up to make good the first article of the charge, when lord Harcourt signified to their lordships, that he had a motion to make, and they accordingly adjourned to their own house.

There he represented, that a great deal of time would be unnecessarily consumed in going through all the articles of the impeachment: that, if the commons could make good the two articles for high-treason, the earl of Oxford would forfeit both life and estate, and there would be an end of the matter; whereas, to proceed in the method proposed by the commons, would draw out the trial to a prodigious length: and, that it would be a great hardship upon a peer, who had already undergone so long a confinement, to appear every day at their bar, like a traitor, and be, at last, found guilty only of high crimes and misdemeanours. He therefore moved, that the commons might not be admitted to proceed, until judgment should be first given upon the articles for high treason.

He was supported by the dukes of Buckingham and Argyle, the earls of Anglesey, Nottingham, and Illy, the lords North and Grey, and Townsend, the bishop of Rochester, and several others; and, though opposed by the earl of Sunderland, the lords Parker, Coningsby and Cadogan, the motion was carried in the affirmative.

This resolution being intimated to the commons, they delivered a paper, importing, that they conceived it to be their undoubted

doubted right to impeach a peer, either for high-treason, or for high crimes and misdemeanours ; or, should they see occasion, to mix both in the same accusation : that the impeachment against the earl of Oxford, was one continued accusation, consisting of high crimes and misdemeanours : that the facts on which the articles preceding those of high treason were grounded, were laid together in the order of time, and followed each other successively, in the same manner in which they were committed : that, as the commons thought this the most natural method of exhibiting the several articles against the said earl, they were of opinion, that they ought to proceed in proof of these articles in the same manner ; since it was manifest, that, in laying open the course of such a wicked administration, the preceding parts threw light upon those which followed ; and that the proof of the several articles of high crimes and misdemeanours, naturally led to the proof of those for high-treason : that, as the commons alone were masters of the evidence, and, on that account, were best able to judge what to charge first, and what next ; so they were most able to determine, in what method to proceed for the advantage of the prosecution, in the event of which all the commons of Great-Britain were

were so highly concerned : that, for their own part, they could see no reason why their lordships might not as well invert the whole order of the impeachment, as to prescribe to the commons those particular articles, on which they were first to proceed ; a restriction, which would produce an inextricable perplexity, both in the facts and evidence, and was by no means consistent with that clearness and perspicuity, in which this affair ought certainly to be placed : that the commons, upon examining the records of parliament, found divers precedents of impeachments for high-treason, and other high crimes and misdemeanours, in the same accusation ; and could not observe that ever the lords made any objection to such manner of proceeding : and that, therefore, the commons were bound in duty to insist upon what they conceived to be their undoubted right of proceeding in this trial, in the method which they had already adopted.

To this remonstrance, the lords returned an answer, implying, that they judged it to be a right inherent in every court of justice, to order and direct such methods of proceeding, as it should think most fit to be observed in all causes, that fell under its cognizance : that the power of judicature in
all

all impeachments, was a right, which incontestably belonged to their lordships, nor was it determined, by any positive rule, in what manner the house of commons ought to proceed in such accusations: that there was no precedent, where the commons, in the prosecution of any impeachment, attempted, in the first place, to make good the articles for high crimes and misdemeanours, and afterwards those for high-treason: that the circumstances attending a peer, who was impeached of high-treason, were so very different from, and so much more ignominious than those, which accompanied one, who was only charged with high crimes and misdemeanours, that it would be equally cruel and unjust to subject a nobleman to the former indignities, when his prosecutors were conscious, that he could only be found guilty of the latter crime: and that, for all these reasons, the lords were determined to adhere to the resolution which they had signified to the commons.

The lower house demanded a free conference, which was refused by the upper. The dispute grew more and more warm. The lords sent a message to the commons, importing, that they intended presently to proceed to the trial of the earl of Oxford. The commons paid no regard to this intimation, but

but adjourned to the third day of July. The lords, repairing to Westminster-hall, took their places, ordered the earl to be brought to the bar, and made proclamation for his accusers to appear. Having waited for a quarter of an hour, they adjourned to their own house, where, after some debate, the earl was acquitted, upon a division: then, returning to the hall, they voted, that he should be set at liberty.

Oxford owed his safety, not only to the dispute between the two houses, but likewise to the late change in the administration; without which he would never have numbered among his friends, as he did on this occasion, the dukes of Devonshire and Argyle, the earls of Nottingham and Ilay, and the lord Townsend. The commons were enraged at the escape of this nobleman, whom they actually believed guilty of having betrayed the interest of his country; and they, at first, proposed to proceed against him by way of attainder: but a motion, which was made for that purpose, was carried in the negative. Nevertheless, in order to express their resentment at his conduct, they presented an address to the king, desiring he might be excepted out of the intended act of grace. The king promised to comply with their

their request, and, in the mean time, forbade the earl to appear at court.

On the fifteenth day of July, the earl of Sunderland delivered, in the house of peers, the act of grace, which passed through both houses without any difficulty. From this indemnity were excepted, the earl of Oxford, Mr. Prior, Mr. Thomas Harley, Mr. Arthur Moor, Crisp, Nodes, Obryan, Redmayne the printer, and Thomson, the assassins in Newgate confined since the reign of king William, and the clan of Mac-gregory in Scotland. By virtue of this act, the earl of Carnwath, and the lords Widdrington and Nairn were immediately discharged; but the lord Duffus was continued in prison, with an allowance of three pounds *per* week. All the gentlemen who lay under sentence of death in Newgate were dismissed, as were those that were detained, on account of the rebellion in the Fleet, the Marshalsea, and other prisons of the kingdom. The yearly value of the forfeited estates in England and Ireland, amounted to forty-seven thousand, six hundred and twenty-six pounds, eighteen shillings and five pence half-penny; the rents of those in Scotland were estimated at twenty-nine thousand, six hundred, and ninety-five pounds, six shillings and eight pence sterling.

The

The act of grace being prepared for the royal assent the very day on which it was presented, the king went to the house of peers in the afternoon, and, having given his sanction to all the bills that were ready, closed the session with a speech, in which he thanked the parliament for the vigour and dispatch, with which they had conducted the public business; and expressed his hope, that such of his subjects, as should, by the present indemnity, be restored to the enjoyment of their former liberty, and to the protection of those laws, against which they had offended, would have a due sense of this his indulgence, and would give him the most acceptable return they could possibly make him, that of becoming friends, instead of enemies, to their country.

The chief object, which engaged the attention of the convocation, was an enquiry into two performances of Dr. Hoadley, bishop of Bangor. One was intitled, "A Preservative against the principles and practices of the Non-jurors:" The other was a sermon preached before the king, under the title of, "The nature of the kingdom of Christ." An answer to this discourse was published by Dr. Snape, master of Eaton-college, and the convocation appointed a committee to examine the bishop's

two performances. The committee drew up a representation, in which the Preservative and the sermon were censured, as tending to subvert all government in Christ's church; to reduce his kingdom to a state of anarchy and confusion; and to impugn and impeach the royal supremacy in causes ecclesiastical, and the authority of the legislature to enforce obedience in matters of religion, by civil sanctions.

To this representation the bishop published an answer, in which he shewed, that, if his doctrine was denied, certain other propositions must be admitted; and these were so absurd and contradictory, as to expose his antagonists in the most ridiculous light. The government thought proper to interrupt the contest by a prorogation; which, however, inflamed the controversy. A great number of pens were drawn against the bishop; but his principal opponents were Dr. Snape and Dr. Sherlock, whom the king removed from the office of his chaplains: and the convocation has not been permitted to sit and do business since that time.

Meanwhile the negotiations of the North were continued against the king of Sweden, who had penetrated into Norway, and was advancing towards Christianstadt, the capital of that kingdom. The Czar had sent

86 *The History of ENGLAND.*

six thousand Russians to assist the allied army, consisting of Danes, Prussians, and Hanoverians, in the reduction of Wismar, which he intended to procure for his niece, the princess Catharina, lately married to the duke of Mecklenburg Swerin : but before his troops arrived, the place had surrendered, and the Russians were not admitted into the garrison ; a circumstance, which increased the misunderstanding between him and the king of Great-Britain.

Nevertheless he agreed to a proposal of making a descent upon Schonen, and actually assumed the command of the combined fleets of England, Holland, Denmark and Russia ; though he was by no means pleased to see Sir John Norris in the Baltic, because he had formed designs against Denmark, which, he knew, the British admiral would protect. He suddenly laid aside the expedition against Schonen, on pretence that the season was too far advanced ; and the king of Denmark published a long manifesto remonstrating against his conduct on this occasion.

By this time baron Gortz, lately set at liberty, had planned a pacification between his master and the Czar, who was discontented with all his German allies, because they opposed his getting any footing in the
empire.

empire. This monarch arrived at Amsterdam in December, whither he was followed by the Czarina in January; and he actually resided at the Hague, when king George passed through it, in his way to England; but he declined an interview with his Britannic majesty. During the Czar's abode in Holland, count Gyllenburg's letters were published at London; and from several passages it appeared, that that monarch was privy to the conspiracy. His minister at the English court presented a memorial, complaining that the king had caused to be printed the malicious insinuations of his enemies. He pretended an entire ignorance of the designs of the Swedish king. He accused the court of England of having privately treated of a separate peace with Charles, and even of having promised to assist him against the Czar, provided he would relinquish his pretensions to Bremen and Verden. Nevertheless he expressed an inclination to re-establish the ancient good understanding between England and Russia, and to engage in vigorous measures for the prosecution of the war against the common enemy.

The memorial was answered by the king of Great Britain, who affected to believe the innocence of the Czar, convinced him of the necessity of publishing the letters at

length for the information of the parliament, and assured him he should have reason to be fully satisfied, if he would remove the only obstacle to their mutual good understanding ; in other words, withdraw the Russian troops from the empire. Notwithstanding these friendly professions, a secret grudge continued to prevail between the two monarchs during the remaining part of their lives.

The Czar made an excursion to the court of Versailles, where he proposed to engage in a confederacy with the regent of France. He offered to enter the empire with a numerous army, which should be at the disposal of the regent, provided he would pay him the subsidies he demanded, which amounted to a considerable sum. His proposal was rejected, and communicated by the regent to the king of Great-Britain. Nevertheless he concluded a treaty of friendship with France, and in compliance with the regent's request, promised to recall his forces from Mecklenburg.

At his return to Amsterdam, he had an interview with baron Gortz, who undertook to compromise all differences between him and the king of Sweden within three months ; and Peter agreed to suspend all operations against Sweden, until that term should

should be expired. A congress was opened at Abo; but the conferences were afterwards transferred to Aland. The articles were soon adjusted. The Czar engaged to assist Charles in the conquest of Norway: and they promised to unite all their forces against the king of Great-Britain, should he endeavour to oppose their designs. Both were enraged against that monarch; and one part of their scheme was supposed to be to raise the pretender to the throne of Great-Britain.

Baron Gortz set out from Aland for Frederickstadt in Norway, with the plan of peace; but, before he arrived, Charles was killed by a cannon-ball from the town, while he visited the trenches, on the thirtieth day of December. Gortz was arrested on the road; and as he had incurred the hatred of the Swedish nobility, by the insolence of his behaviour, he was immediately brought to the scaffold, where he suffered with great resolution. The death of Charles produced an entire change in the face of affairs. Sweden was obliged to submit; while the Czar, the king of Denmark, and king George, as elector of Hanover, remained in possession of what they had acquired.

The peace of the North was no sooner re-established, than fresh disturbances broke out in the Southern parts of Europe. The emperor had declared war against the Turks, who had attacked and driven his allies, the Venetians, from the Morea. The pope considered this as a religious war, and obtained repeated assurances from the king of Spain, that he would not undertake any thing against the emperor, while engaged in so laudable a quarrel. Philip had even sent a squadron of six ships and five galleys to the assistance of the Venetians. In the course of this year, however, he equipped such a strong armament as gave occasion to suspect, that, instead of assisting the Christian powers against the Infidels, he intended to make some attempt on the dominions of the emperor.

The event justified the suspicion. On the twentieth day of July, the marquis de Lede, commander of the Spanish fleet, set sail from Barcelona, and landing at Cagliari in Sardinia, which belonged to his Imperial majesty, reduced the whole island to subjection. At the same time, Philip pretended to justify these proceedings by a manifesto, in which he alledged, that the archduke had, contrary to the faith of treaties, encouraged and supported the rebellion of his subjects

subjects in Catalonia, by frequent succours from Naples and other places; and that the grand inquisitor of Spain had been seized, though furnished with a passport from his holiness.

He promised, however, to proceed no farther, and suspend all operations, that the powers of Europe might have time and opportunity so contrive expedients for adjusting all differences, and securing the peace and balance of power in Italy; and he even agreed to refer the decision of this important affair to the king of Great-Britain and the States-General. These powers undertook the office. Conferences were begun between the ministers of the emperor, France, and Holland: and these produced, in the course of the following year, the famous quadruple alliance.

About this time there happened an incident, which greatly engaged the attention of the English. The pretender, who resided at Urbino, having received intelligence from Paris, that a design was formed against his life, pope Clement the eleventh, gave directions, that all foreigners in that neighbourhood, especially English, should be strictly examined, and such as were suspected, committed to custody. The earl of Peterborough arriving at Bologna with a few armed fol-

followers, was seized, with all his papers. Being interrogated, he said, he came to pass some time in Italy for the benefit of the air, and that his followers were armed for his defence. He was close confined for a whole month in Fort Urbino, and his attendants were sent to prison. Nothing appearing to justify the suspicion, he was set at liberty with a profusion of civilities.

The English were enraged at this insult offered one of their nobility; but the king was satisfied with demanding and receiving reparation for the affront. The pope agreed to write a letter with his own hand to an ally of Great-Britain, declaring, that the legate of Bologna had violently and unjustly, without the knowledge of his holiness, caused the earl of Peterborough to be seized upon suspicions, which proved to be ill-grounded; and that the cardinal legate should send a declaration to the English admiral in the Mediterranean, that he had asked forgiveness of his holiness, and now begged pardon of his Britannic majesty, for having unadvisedly arrested a peer of Great-Britain on his travels. The letter and declaration were accordingly sent, and are still preserved, as evidences of the earl of Peterborough's innocence, and the falsity of the
the

the suspicions, which was entertained of his intentions.

On the third day of November the princess of Wales was delivered of a prince, who was baptized on the twenty-eighth day of the same month, and died in a short time after. This baptism was unhappily productive of a difference between the king and the prince of Wales. The custom, it seems, on such an occasion, was, that, when the child was a boy, and the king stood god-father, the place of second god-father was supplied by one of the principal lords of the court, commonly the lord-chamberlain for the time being. The prince, who was ignorant of the custom, intended, that his uncle, the duke of York and bishop of Onsbury, should stand god-father. The king, who had been at the pains to inform himself of the matter, appointed the duke of Newcastle, then lord-chamberlain, to stand, not as representing the duke of York, but in his own proper name and person. The prince, not knowing that the duke acted in obedience to his majesty's command, was highly incensed at his grace's behaviour, and, after the ceremony, expressed his resentment in very warm terms.

The king, thinking it necessary to check such an unseasonable appearance of passion, ordered

ordered the prince to confine himself within his own apartments; and afterwards signified his pleasure that he should quit the palace of St. James's. He retired with the princess to a house belonging to the earl of Grantham; but the children were detained at the palace. Notice was given to all peers and peeresses, and all privy-counsellors and their wives, that in case they visited the prince and princess, they should forbear coming into his majesty's presence; and all who enjoyed posts and places under both king and prince, were obliged to quit the service of one or other, at their option.

The parliament meeting on the twenty-first day of November, the king in his speech to both houses, observed, that he had reduced the army to very near one half since the beginning of last session: that he could heartily wish, that, at a time, when the common enemies of the reformed religion were, by all manner of artifices, endeavouring to undermine and weaken it, both at home and abroad, all those, who were friends to the present happy establishment, might unanimously concur in some proper method for the greater strengthening the Protestant interest; of which, as the church of England was unquestionably the main support and bulwark, so would she reap the prin-

principal benefit of every advantage, accruing from the union and mutual charity of all Protestants: and that as none could recommend themselves more effectually to his favour and countenance, than by a sincere zeal for the just rights of the crown and liberties of the people, he was firmly determined to encourage all those, who acted agreeable to the constitution of these kingdoms, and consequently to the principles, on which his government was founded.

Addresses of thanks having been presented by both houses, the commons proceeded to take into consideration the estimates and accounts, in order to settle the establishment of the army, navy, and ordnance. Ten thousand men were voted for the sea service; and the sum of two hundred and twenty-four thousand, eight hundred and fifty-seven pounds, fourteen shillings and eleven pence, was granted for defraying the expences of the navy.

When the supply for the army fell under deliberation, a very warm debate ensued upon the number of troops that ought to be maintained. Sir William Wyndham, Mr. Shippen, and Mr. Walpole endeavoured to prove that twelve thousand men were fully sufficient. They were answered by Mr. Craggs,

Craggs, secretary at war, and Sir David Dalrymple, who affirmed, that sixteen thousand were absolutely necessary.

Mr. Shippen in the course of the debate said, that the second paragraph of the king's speech seemed rather to be calculated for the meridian of Germany than of Great-Britain; and that it was a great misfortune, the king was a stranger to our language and constitution. This insolent expression was highly resented by several members, particularly by Mr. Lechmere, who urged, that it was a scandalous invective against the king's person and government; and moved that the member who used it, should be sent to the Tower. Mr. Walpole, observed, that if the words in question were uttered by the person, on whom they were charged, the Tower was too light a punishment for his rashness; but as his meaning might have been misunderstood in the heat of debate, he thought he should be indulged with the liberty of explaining himself. Mr. Shippen refusing to retract or excuse what he had said, was voted to the Tower by a great majority. The number of land forces was fixed at sixteen thousand three hundred and forty-seven effective men; and for the maintenance of these the sum of six hundred

hundred and fifty thousand pounds was allotted.

Mr. Aislabe having expatiated on the great scarcity of silver coin, occasioned by the exportation of silver and the importation of gold, moved that a stop might be put to this growing evil, by lowering the value of gold specie. The commons examined an ingenious representation on this subject, presented to the Treasury, by the celebrated Sir Isaac Newton, master of the Mint. Mr. Caswel observed, that the over-valuation of gold in the currency of Great-Britain had been the occasion of this evil, and had produced a clandestine trade carried on by the Dutch and Hamburgers, with the Jews and other traders of this kingdom, for exporting the silver coin and importing gold, which being coined at the Mint, yielded a profit of fifteen pence upon every guinea.

The house presented an address to the king, intreating, that a proclamation might be issued, forbidding all persons to utter or receive guineas at a higher rate than one and twenty shillings each; which was six-pence less than the usual value. His majesty complied with their request; though the expedient had not, at first, the desired effect. People imagining, that the price of silver would be raised or that of gold low-

ered still further, hoarded up the former specie in great quantities. In order to remove these apprehensions, the two houses resolved, that the standard of the gold and silver coin of this kingdom should not be altered in fineness, weight, or denomination; and they ordered a bill to be brought in to prevent the melting down of the silver coin.*

About this time one James Shepherd, a youth of eighteen, apprentice to a coach-maker, and an enthusiast in Jacobitism, sent a letter to one Mr. Leathes, a Nonjuring clergyman, proposing a scheme for assassinating the king. He was immediately apprehended and brought to his trial. He said he had imbibed these principles at the school of Salisbury, and had been confirmed in them by the writings of several of the Nonjuring clergy. He owned the design of which he was accused, declared he had harboured it for three years past, nor did he think there was any sin in carrying it into execution. He was accordingly condemned upon his own confession, and executed at Tyburn.

This was likewise the fate of the marquis di Paleotti, an Italian nobleman, brother to the duchess of Shrewsbury. He had, in a transport

transport of passion, killed his own servant; and seemed indeed to be disordered in his intellects. After sentence of death had passed upon him, strong applications were made to the king for a pardon, as well by his sister the dutchess, as by many other persons of the first distinction: but the common people became so clamorous for justice, that it was thought dangerous to rescue him from the penalties of the law, which he accordingly underwent in the most ignominious manner.

The principal affair, which came before the parliament during this session, was the bill for regulating the land-forces, and punishing mutiny and desertion. This bill was considered as an incroachment on the liberties of the people, and the constitution of the kingdom, inasmuch as it established martial law, and wrested from the civil magistrate the cognizance of crimes and misdemeanours, committed by the officers and soldiers of the army. The dangers, that might arise from such a power, were explained in the lower house by Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Harley, and Mr. Robert Walpole. Their arguments were answered by lord Moleworth, general Lumley, Sir Joseph Jekyll, Mr. Craggs, and Mr. Lech-

mere. After a violent debate, the bill was carried by a considerable majority.

In the upper house lord Harcourt represented, that the parliament, or the representative of the whole nation, had ever been extremely jealous of the legislative power with which they were vested : that the lords, in a particular manner, ought to be tender of this point, because it was a branch of their prerogative to be the supreme court of judicature : that, by this bill, however, which enabled the king to establish courts-martial, with power to try and determine any offences specified in the articles of war, the parliament conferred upon the crown a sole legislative power, which was delegated to a military council : that this bill set aside all other laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, in relation to the soldiery ; and gave to courts-martial a larger jurisdiction than seemed necessary for maintaining discipline in the army : that such jurisdiction extended not only to mutiny, desertion, and breach of duty, but also to all immoralities, and other offences, which might be committed by any officer or soldier against his fellow-subjects ; in consequence of which the law of the land might be either obstructed or superseded by a court-martial : that the officers constituting

ing such a court, did at once supply the place of judges and jurymen, and ought therefore to be upon oath, when engaged in the trial of any offence whatsoever ; whereas it was provided by the bill, that they should be sworn, when they were trying such offences only as were punishable by death : that courts-martial assumed to themselves an arbitrary and unprecedented authority, of which there was a remarkable instance in the case of an ensign of the guards, who was sentenced to death without being heard ; a proceeding, which was contrary to *Magna Charta* and to the birth-rights and privileges of Englishmen : and that therefore it was the duty of the parliament to restrain and circumscribe such a dangerous and unconstitutional power.

Lord Carteret replied, that he had maturely considered the present subject of debate, not as a person in a public station, but as a private unprejudiced man ; and that he was convinced in his judgement and conscience, that it was necessary both for the support of the present establishment, and the security of the nation, to keep up the forces now on foot : that he was confirmed in this opinion, by reflecting on the designs of the pretender and his friends, who seemed to have nothing more at heart,

than to procure the disbanding of those forces, which had suppressed the late unnatural rebellion: that he doubted not, but the whole body of the nobility, who composed that august assembly, were inviolably attached to his majesty: that the king had also the best part of the landed, and all the trading interest: that as to the clergy, he would say nothing——but it was notorious, that the bulk of the populace had been poisoned, and that the poison was not yet quite expelled: that the dangers, which seemed to be apprehended from the present army, were merely chimerical, or, at least, might be easily remedied in any subsequent session of parliament; whereas the dangers, with which the nation was threatened from the pretender and his friends, in case there was no army to oppose them, were real, and the mischiefs, that would attend the success of their designs fatal and irreparable: that if there had been such a standing force as was now on foot to suppress, in the bud, the tumults and riots, which were raised immediately after his majesty's accession to the throne, in all probability, there would have been no open rebellion: that, on the other hand, if there had not been troops in readiness to assist the civil power in suppressing the late riotous assemblies of the wool-combers and weavers in the counties of
De-

Devon and Somerset, there would have, by time, been another rebellion: that the quoting *Magna Charta* was, in his opinion, entirely foreign to the present debate: the thing now in question, and that, in which they were immediately concerned, was, to secure the government and support the Protestant succession against bold, vigilant, and restless enemies: and that they had the more reason to be upon their guard, because the trumpeters of sedition and rebellion, had again forcibly intruded themselves into several pulpits in Scotland. Several other speeches were made upon the subject: at last the question being put was carried in the affirmative; though a good number of lords entered their protest.

This affair being finished, a bill was introduced for vesting in trustees the forfeited estates in Britain and Ireland, to be sold for the use of the public; for giving relief to lawful creditors, by determining the claims; and for the more effectual bringing into the respective exchequers, the rents and profits of the estates till sold. The time of claiming was prolonged: the sum of twenty thousand pounds was reserved out of the sale of the estates in Scotland, for erecting schools: and eight thousand pounds for building barracks in that kingdom.

His majesty having sent a message to the commons, importing, that he had lately received

ceived such intelligence from abroad, as gave him reason to believe, that a naval force, employed where it should be necessary, would add weight to his endeavours for the public good ; he therefore thought proper to acquaint the house with this circumstance, not doubting, but that, in case he should be obliged, at this critical juncture, to exceed the number of men granted this year for the sea-service, the house, at their next meeting, would provide for such exceedings.

This message was favourably received. The commons drew up and presented an address, assuring his majesty, that they would make good such exceedings of seamen, as he should find necessary to promote the welfare of his own kingdom, and preserve the tranquility of Europe. On the twenty-first day of March, the king went to the house of peers, and after having passed the bills that were ready for the royal assent, made a short speech to both houses ; after which the parliament was prorogued to the eleventh day of November.

About this time some changes were made in the ministry. Lord chancellor Cowper, who had been advanced to the dignity of an earl, resigned the great seal, which was at first put in commission ; but afterwards given to lord Parker, as high-chancellor. The earl of Sun-

Sunderland was constituted president of the council, and first commissioner of the treasury. The earl of Holderness was placed at the head of the board of trade. The lord Stanhope and Mr. Craggs were appointed secretaries of state. Lord Stanhope and lord Cadogan were afterwards created earls.

Mean while, the conduct of the Spanish monarch attracted the attention of all Europe. Notwithstanding the promise he had made to suspend his military operations, and refer the disputes, between him and the emperor, to the arbitration of England and Holland, he rejected, with haughtiness, the proposals of these potentates, and still continued his warlike preparations. By the care and diligence of his prime minister, cardinal Alberoni, he equipped a very formidable armament, which, in the beginning of June set sail from Barcelona, towards Italy; but the destination of it was not known.

A strong squadron having been fitted out in England, the marquis de Monteleone, ambassador from Spain, represented, in a memorial to the British ministry, that so powerful an armament, in time of peace, could not but give umbrage to the king his master, and alter the good intelligence that subsisted between the two crowns. The king replied, that he had no intention to conceal
the

the design of that armament; and that he proposed to send admiral Byng with a powerful squadron into the Mediterranean, to maintain the neutrality of Italy, against all who should endeavour to disturb it.

In the mean time, the negociations of the English and French ministers produced the quadruple alliance between Great-Britain, France, the Emperor, and the States-General. This famous treaty imported, that the king of Spain should restore to the emperor, within two months after the ratification of the articles, the kingdom of Sardinia, and renounce all right to that island: that he should likewise renounce all right and claim to the dominions of the emperor in Italy and the Netherlands; consent to the emperor's being put in possession of Sicily, and renounce the right of reversion of that kingdom to the crown of Spain as settled by the treaty of Utrecht, on condition, however, of having Sardinia in exchange: that the emperor should renounce, for himself, heirs and successors, all right and pretension to any dominions, of which the king of Spain was acknowledged rightful possessor, by the treaty of Utrecht: that he should own Philip as lawful king of Spain and the Indies, and give him the titles and prerogatives belonging to that dignity: that
the

the dutchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, should be accounted as male fiefs of the empire, and should descend, in default of male heirs, to the queen of Spain's eldest son; but that none of these dutchies should ever be possessed by a prince, who was at the same time king of Spain, nor should the king of Spain ever take upon him the guardianship of that prince: that the king of Sicily should restore that kingdom to the emperor, within two months after the ratification of the articles: that, in return, the emperor should give to the king of Sicily, the island of Sardinia, which he should enjoy, with the title of king, but the right of reversion, in default of heirs male, should be reserved to the crown of Spain: that the kings of Spain and Sicily should be allowed three months to consider, whether they would accept or reject the terms proposed; and if, contrary to the wishes of all Europe, they should continue refractory, the mediators should join their forces, and compel them to submit: that, if any of the mediators should be attacked, on account of the succours lent to the emperor, the others should declare war against the aggressor, and not lay down their arms till the emperor was put in possession of Sicily, and established in the firm enjoyment of his Italian dominions: that,

that, if either of the kings should accept the terms proposed by the allies, he should join his forces with those of the mediators, in order to oblige the other to comply: and, finally, to shew that nothing but justice and peace was intended, it was expressly stipulated, that as soon as the emperor was put in possession of Sicily, he should renounce all pretensions to Spain and the Indies, whether king Philip acceded or not, inasmuch as the guaranty of the mediators would be to his Imperial majesty, a security, equal to the renunciations of the Spanish monarch, for Sicily, the Italian dominions, and the Netherlands.

Such was the nature of the quadruple alliance, by which king George and the duke of Orleans hoped to preserve and maintain the tranquillity of Europe; but, contrary to their expectations, it proved the cause of all the disputes, which have arisen between England and Spain in the sequel. The States-General did not approve of such violent measures, and, on various pretences, delayed their consent; but at length they acceded to the treaty, which the mediators determined, without loss of time, to render effectual.

King George having, in vain, endeavoured by intreaties and persuasions, to induce the king of Spain to agree to the terms,

resolved, at last, to inforce this remonstrance by more powerful arguments. Sir George Byng sailed from Spithead, on the fourth day of June, with twenty ships of the line, two fire ships, two bomb vessels, and ample instructions how to act on all emergencies. He arrived at Cape St. Vincent on the thirtieth day of the month, when he dispatched his secretary, Mr. Allix, to Cadiz, with a letter to colonel Stanhope, the British minister at Madrid, desiring him to acquaint his most Catholic majesty with the admiral's arrival in those parts, and lay before him the following articles of his instructions.

“ As a suspension of arms is absolutely
 “ necessary for opening conferences and con-
 “ ducting the negotiations, you are to make
 “ instances with both parties to cease from
 “ using any further acts of hostility: but,
 “ in case the Spaniards do still insist, with
 “ their ships of war and forces, to attack
 “ the kingdom of Naples, or other the
 “ territories of the emperor in Italy, or to
 “ land in any part of Italy, which can only
 “ be with a design to invade the emperor's
 “ dominions, against whom they have de-
 “ clared war by invading Sardinia; or, if
 “ they should endeavour to make themselves
 “ masters of the kingdom of Sicily, which
 Vol. XXXIV. K “ must

“ must be with a design to invade the king-
 “ dom of Naples; in such a case, you are,
 “ with all your power, to hinder and ob-
 “ struct the same. If it should so happen, that,
 “ at your arrival, with the fleet under your
 “ command, in the Mediterranean, the Span-
 “ iards should already have landed any
 “ troops in Italy, in order to invade the
 “ emperor’s territories, you shall endeavour
 “ amicably to dissuade them from persever-
 “ ing in such an attempt, and offer them
 “ your assistance to help them to withdraw
 “ their troops and put an end to all farther
 “ acts of hostility. But, in case these your
 “ friendly endeavours should prove ineffec-
 “ tual, you shall, by keeping company
 “ with, or intercepting their ships or con-
 “ voy, or, if it be necessary, by openly op-
 “ posing them, defend the emperor’s terri-
 “ tories from any further attempt.”

When cardinal Alberoni perused these in-
 structions, he told colonel Stanhope, with
 some warmth, that his master would run all
 hazards, and even suffer himself to be driven
 out of Spain, rather than recall his troops, or
 consent to a suspension of arms. He said,
 the Spaniards were not to be frightened;
 and he was so well convinced, that the fleet
 would do their duty, that, in case of their
 being

being attacked, he should be in no pain for the success. Mr. Stanhope having put into his hands a list of the British Squadron, and desired him to compare its strength with that of their own fleet, he threw it on the ground with great emotion.

The colonel, with much temper, intreated him to consider the sincere regard, which the king his master had always shewn for the honour and interest of his Catholic majesty, of which it was impossible to give stronger proofs than he had done by his unwearied endeavours, through the whole course of the present negociation, to procure for Spain the most advantageous conditions possible; and that in these endeavours he had succeeded beyond the expectation of any reasonable, unprejudiced person: that, though by the treaty of Utrecht for the neutrality of Italy, concluded at the request of the king of Spain himself; as also by that of Westminster, bearing date the twenty fifth day of May, 1716, his majesty was obliged to defend the emperor's dominions, when attacked, he had hitherto acted only as a mediator, though, ever since the enterprize against Sardinia, he became, by his treaties, a party in the war, and had, for a year and upwards, been strongly importuned by the emperor:

112 *The History of* ENGLAND.

peror to fulfil his engagements: that even now, when it was impossible for him to delay any longer the sending his fleet into the Mediterranean, it plainly appeared by the admiral's instructions, which he had communicated to his eminence, and by the orders which he himself had received, that his majesty had nothing more at heart than that the fleet might be employed in promoting the interests of the king of Spain: and therefore he hoped, his Catholic majesty would not, by refusing to recall his troops, or consent to a suspension of arms, put it out of his power to give every proof of the sincere friendship, which he always desired to cultivate with the crown of Spain.

All that the cardinal could be brought to promise, was, that he would lay the admiral's letter before the king, and let the envoy know his majesty's resolution. This, however, he thought proper to delay for more than a week, probably with a view of giving the Spanish forces time to secure a firm footing in the island of Sicily. At last he sent back the admiral's letter to Mr. Stanhope, with a note importing, that the chevalier Byng might execute the orders he had received from the king his master.

The admiral in passing by Gibraltar was joined by vice-admiral Cornwall with the Ar-

Argyle and Charles Galley. He proceeded to Minorca, where he relieved the garrison of Port-mahon. Then he sailed for Naples, where he arrived on the first day of August, and was received as a deliverer; for the Neapolitans had been under the most terrible apprehensions of an invasion from the Spaniards.

Here he had an interview with the Viceroy, count Dawn, by whom he was treated with the most distinguished respect, and from whom he received intelligence, that the Spanish army, amounting to thirty thousand men, commanded by the marquis de Lede, had landed in Sicily, reduced Palermo and Messina, and was then employed in the siege of the citadel belonging to this last city; that the Piedmontese garrison would soon be obliged to surrender, if not relieved: and that an alliance was on the carpet between the emperor and the king of Sicily, which last had desired the assistance of the Imperial troops, and agreed to receive them into the citadel of Messina.

The admiral immediately resolved to sail thither, and took under his convoy a reinforcement of two thousand Germans for the citadel, under the command of general Wetzell. He forthwith departed from Naples, and on the ninth day of August,

came

114 *The History of ENGLAND:*

came in sight of the Faro off Messina. He dispatched his own captain with a polite message to the marquis de Lede, proposing a cessation of arms in Sicily for two months, that the powers of Europe might have time to concert measures for restoring a lasting peace; and declaring, that, should this proposal be rejected, he would, in pursuance of his instructions, use all his force to prevent further attempts to disturb the dominions, which his master had engaged to defend. The marquis replied, that as he had no powers to treat, he could not agree to a suspension of hostilities, but should obey his orders, which directed him to subdue Sicily for his master, the king of Spain.

The Spanish fleet had sailed from the harbour of Messina, on the day before the English squadron appeared. Admiral Byng supposing they had retired to Malta, directed his course towards Messina, in order to encourage the garrison in the citadel. But, in doubling the Faro, he discovered two Spanish scouts, and learned from the people of a felucca from the Calabrian shore, that they had seen from the hills, the Spanish fleet lying to in order of battle.

The admiral immediately detached general Wetzel, with the German troops to Reggio, under convoy of two ships of war. Then he

He stood through the Faro after the Spanish scouts that led him to their main fleet, which before noon he discerned in line of battle, amounting to twenty-seven sail large and small, besides two fire-ships, four bomb-vessels, and seven gallies. They were commanded in chief by Don Antonio de Castañeta, under whom were the four rear admirals, Chacon, Mari, Guevara, and Cammock. At sight of the English Squadron, they stood away large, but still in order of battle; and Byng gave chase all the rest of the day, and the succeeding night.

In the morning, which was the eleventh of August, rear-admiral Mari, with six ships of war, the gallies, fire-ships, bomb-ketches, and store-ships, separated from the main fleet, and stood in for the Sicilian shore. The English admiral detached captain Walton, with six ships, in pursuit of them; and they were soon engaged. He himself continued to chase their main fleet; and, about ten o'clock, the battle began. The Spaniards seemed to be distracted in their counsels, and acted in confusion. They made a running fight, and the admirals behaved with courage and resolution, in spite of which they were all taken, except Cammock, who made his escape to Malta, with three ships of war, and as many frigates.

In

In this engagement, which happened off cape Passaro, captain Haddock of the *Grafton* exhibited repeated proofs of the most undaunted courage. As his ship was a good sailer, he always attacked the headmost of the enemy; and, after having disabled them one by one, continued his course in pursuit of others, leaving such as he had damaged to be picked up by those that followed. On the eighteenth, a letter was brought to the admiral from captain Walton, importing, that he had taken four Spanish ships of war; together with a bomb-ketch, and a vessel laden with arms; and that he had burned four ships of war, a fireship, and a bomb-vessel.

Before king George received an account of this engagement from the admiral, he wrote

* Captain Walton seems to have been a person whose natural talents were fitter for achieving a gallant action, than describing one. His letter on this occasion, is justly deemed a curious specimen of military eloquence. It was conceived in the following terms:

"Sir,

"We have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships and vessels which were upon the coast, the number as per margin. I am, &c.

"Canterbury, off Syracuse,

"G. WALTON."

"16 Aug. 1718.

wrote him a letter, * with his own hand, approving his conduct. When Sir George's eldest son arrived in England, with a circumstantial account of the action, he was graciously received, gratified with a handsome present, and sent back with plenipotentiary powers to his father, to negotiate with the several princes and states of Italy, as he should see occasion. He likewise carried the king's royal grant to the officers and seamen, of all the prizes they had taken from the Spaniards.

Notwithstanding this victory, the Spanish army prosecuted the siege of Messina with such vigour, that the governor surrendered the

* The letter was in French, and may be thus translated :

" Monsieur le chevalier Byng,

" Though I have not yet heard from you directly,
 " I am informed of the victory which the fleet has
 " gained under your command, and I was unwilling to
 " delay the satisfaction which my approbation of your
 " conduct might afford you. I thank you for it, and
 " desire you will express my satisfaction to all the
 " brave people who have signalized themselves on the
 " occasion. Secretary Craggs has orders to inform
 " you more at large of my intentions; but I was pleased
 " to assure you myself, that I am,

" Monsieur le chevalier Byng,

" Your good friend,

" GEORGE R."

118 *The History of ENGLAND:*

the place by capitulation, on the twenty-ninth day of September; and the garrison was transported to Syracuse and Reggio. A treaty was now concluded at Vienna, between the emperor and the duke of Savoy. They agreed to form an army for the conquest of Sardinia, in behalf of the duke, who, in the mean time, engaged to evacuate Sicily; but until his troops could be conveyed from that island, he consented that they should co-operate with the Germans against the common enemy.

Admiral Byng continued to assist the Imperialists in Sicily, during the best part of the winter, by clearing the seas of the Spaniards, and preserving a free communication between the German forces, and the Calabrian shore, from whence they were supplied with provisions. He conferred with the viceroy of Naples, and the other Imperial generals, about the operations of the ensuing campaign; and count Hamilton was dispatched to Vienna, to acquaint the emperor with the result of their deliberations. Then, the admiral set sail for Mahon, that his ships might be refitted, and put in a condition to take the sea in the spring, while his son remained at Naples to manage his affairs with the viceroy, and inform the court of England

land of whatever remarkable should happen in that quarter.

The defeat of the Spanish fleet was a subject which exercised the sagacity, and employed the conjecture of all the politicians in Europe. Spain exclaimed against the conduct of England, as inconsistent with the rules of good faith, for the observance of which she had always been so famous. The marquis de Monteleone wrote a letter to Mr. secretary Craggs, in which he expostulated with him on such a violent and unprovoked outrage.

Cardinal Alberoni, in a letter to that minister, inveighed against it as a base, unworthy action. He observed, that the English admiral only professed to act as a peaceful mediator, and never threatened to proceed to hostilities. He said, the neutrality of Italy was a weak pretence, since every body knew that neutrality had been long at an end; and that the princes, guarantees of the treaty of Utrecht, were entirely discharged from their engagements, not only by the scandalous infringements committed by the Austrians in the evacuation of Catalonia and Majorca; but also, because the guaranty was no longer binding, than till a peace was concluded with France. He reproached the English ministry with having revived and supported

supported this neutrality, not by an amicable mediation, but by open violence, and artfully abusing the confidence and security of the Spaniards. He alledged the proceeding was so unjustifiable, that even admiral Byng, struck with remorse for his late conduct, was obliged to have recourse to falsehood, by pretending that the Spanish ships drew up first in order of battle, and fired upon the English.

Mr. Craggs in his answer to the marquis de Monteleone's letter, affirmed, that hostilities were actually begun by the Spaniards. He said his Catholic majesty had all the reason in the world to expect the action, inasmuch as he had been previously informed of Admiral Byng's instructions, to which he thought proper to return a haughty answer, importing that he might execute the orders he had received from his master.

Whether hostilities were begun by the English or the Spaniards, or whatever irregularities there might be in the proceedings on either side, the action was not only beneficial to the common cause, but absolutely necessary to disappoint the designs of the cardinal, who aimed at nothing less than exciting a general war in Europe, which had been so lately delivered from that dreadful calamity. This, in the eyes of the true politicians,

liticians, will be sufficient to justify a slight breach of faith, supposing there had been any.

The parliament meeting on the eleventh day of November, the king, in his speech to both Houses, observed, that, during the recess, he had concluded such treaties and alliances with the two greatest princes of Europe, as would, in all human probability, induce others to follow their example, and render any attempts to disturb the public tranquillity not only dangerous, but impracticable; that these engagements, he was persuaded, would be the more agreeable to all his good subjects, as they bound the contracting powers to support the succession to these kingdoms in his family, to which some of them were not at all, and others not so fully obliged by any former treaties: that, during the whole course of these negotiations, a most strict regard had been paid to the interest of Spain, and better conditions had been stipulated for that king than had been demanded in his behalf, even at the treaty of Utrecht; but the war in Hungary, which, by his mediation, was now happily ended, having tempted the Spaniards unjustly to attack the emperor, and the hopes they had since conceived of raising disturbances in Great-Britain, having encouraged them to believe, that he

should not be able to act in pursuance of his treaties for the defence of the dominions, which they had invaded, nor even to support those other essential and necessary conditions of the treaty of Utrecht, which provided against the two great monarchies of Europe being at any time hereafter united under one sovereign; they had not only persisted in such a notorious violation of the public peace and tranquillity, but had also rejected all his amicable proposals, and broke through their most sacred engagements for the security of the English commerce: that to vindicate, therefore, the faith of his former treaties, as well as to maintain those, which he had lately concluded, and to protect and defend the trade of his subjects, which had, in every branch, been violently and unjustly oppressed, it became necessary for his naval forces to check the progress of the Spaniards; that it was reasonable to hope, that the success of his arms, and the repeated offers of friendship, which he had never ceased to make to them in the most pressing manner, as well as the measures concerted with the emperor and the most Christian king to restore the public tranquillity, would have produced a better disposition in the court of Spain; but he had received information, that, instead of
lit

listening to reasonable proposals of peace, that court had lately sent orders to all the ports of Spain and the West-Indies, to fit out privateers, in order to make prize of the English merchantmen: that he was persuaded a British parliament would enable him to resent such treatment with a becoming spirit; and it was with pleasure he could assure them, that his good brother, the regent of France, was readily disposed to concur and join with him in the most vigorous and effectual measures: that the firm confidence he reposed in the affection of his people, together with his earnest desire to ease them of every charge not absolutely necessary, had determined him, immediately after the exchange of the ratifications of the grand alliance, to make a more considerable reduction of his land forces; nor could he, by any other means, better express how little he regarded the attempts of his enemies to disturb the peace of his kingdoms, even though Spain should continue some time longer to prosecute the war: that his naval force, employed in concert with his allies, would, he hoped, soon put an end to the troubles, which the ambitious views of that court had excited, and secure to his subjects the full performance of the many treaties that had been made for the bene-

fit of their commerce: that he hoped the commons would grant him such supplies, as would enable him to carry on the service of the year with spirit and resolution: that there never was a time when unanimity, vigour, and dispatch were more necessary than at present towards the attaining the many good ends, which they had now in view: he could safely say he had done his part; it remained for them to put the finishing hand to this great work: their friends and their enemies, both at home and abroad, were waiting the event of their resolutions; and he dared to affirm, that the former had nothing to fear, nor the latter any thing to hope, at this important juncture, from the conduct of a parliament, who, during the whole course of his reign, had given such incontestible proofs of their zeal and affection to his person and government, and of their inviolable attachment to the interest of their country.

The king was no sooner withdrawn, than lord Carteret moved for an address of thanks and congratulation to his majesty. Strong opposition was made to this motion by the anti-courtiers, who alledged, that such an address was, in effect, to approve a sea-fight, which might be attended with dangerous consequences, and to give the sanction

sion of that august assembly to a measure, which, upon examination, might appear to clash with the law of nations, or former treaties, or to be prejudicial to the trade of Great-Britain: that they ought to proceed with the utmost caution and maturest deliberation, in an affair, on which the honour, as well as the interest of nations were so sensibly concerned.

Lord Strafford insisted, that, before they approved the sea-fight, they ought to be satisfied whether it happened before or after the conclusion of the quadruple alliance: and therefore moved for an address, that Sir George Byng's instructions might be laid before the house.

Earl Stanhope replied, that there was no occasion for such an address, since, by his majesty's command, he had already laid before the house the treaties, of which the late sea-fight was a consequence: particularly the treaty for a defensive alliance between the emperor and his majesty, concluded at Westminster on the twenty fifth day of May, 1716; and the treaty of alliance for restoring and settling the public peace signed at London on the twenty-second day of July. He then undertook to demonstrate the justice and equity of those treaties, which were calculated to preserve and maintain the

tranquillity of Europe, by rendering the treaty of Utrecht effectual, especially in preventing two great monarchies of France and Spain from being united under the same sovereign, and establishing the succession of these kingdoms in his majesty's family.

He affirmed, that the court of Spain had violated the treaty of Utrecht, and acted against the public faith, in attacking the emperor's dominions, while he was engaged in a war against the enemies of Christendom; and that they had rejected his majesty's friendly offices and offers for mediating an accomodation. He explained the cause of his own journey to Spain. He added, that it was high time to check the growth of the naval power of Spain, in order to protect and secure the trade of the British subjects, which had been violently oppressed by the Spaniards.

He concluded with observing, that, both with relation to Sir George Byng's instructions, and every other step that had been taken in the whole affair, his majesty had acted by the advice of his privy-council: that he himself was one of that council; and he thought it an honour to have advised his majesty to the pursuit of measures, which, he was persuaded, were agreeable to the interest of his country: that he doubted not, but, upon the strictest examination, they would

would be heartily approved by all true Englishmen: and that he was so fully satisfied of this truth, that he would engage to answer for their rectitude with his head. This speech made a deep impression upon the whole assembly; and though several peers still continued to start new objections, the motion was carried by a considerable majority.

The same affair was contested with no less eagerness in the lower house, where the lord Hinchinbroke moved, that in the address of thanks, they should declare their entire satisfaction with those measures, which had already been taken for the strengthening the Protestant succession, and establishing a lasting tranquillity in Europe.

The members in the opposition alledged, that it was unparliamentary and unprecedented, on the first day of the session, to enter upon particulars: that the business in question was of the highest importance, and deserved the most mature deliberation: and that before they approved the measures, which had been taken, they ought to examine the treaties and reasons, on which those measures were founded. To this it was answered, that the measures, which had been taken, were grounded on treaties, which had been laid before the house, and which might be examined, as soon as the members thought pro-

proper; but that, in the mean time, it was necessary, at this critical juncture, when the eyes of all Europe were fixed on the proceedings of this parliament, early to come to a vigorous resolution, which could not fail to have its due influence on the general face of affairs abroad.

Mr. Walpole, who was now engaged in the opposition, alledged, that it was contrary to the common rules of that house, to approve of any thing, before it was known: that he was as ready, as any person in that august assembly, to acknowledge his majesty's great care for the general peace of Europe, and the interest of Great Britain; but that the giving sanction, in the manner proposed, to the late measures, could have no other view than that of screening ministers, who were conscious of having begun a war with Spain, and now wanted to make it the parliament's war. He said, that, instead of an entire satisfaction, they ought to express their entire dissatisfaction with a conduct, which was contrarary to the law of nations, and a breach of the most solemn treaties.

Mr. secretary Craggs, in a long speech, explained the nature of the quadruple alliance and vindicated the ministers in every step they had taken in the late proceedings.

The

The address, as moved by lord Hinchinbroke, was at last carried by a great majority, and presented to his majesty.

This point being settled, the commons proceeded to consider the supply. They voted thirteen thousand five hundred sailors, and twelve thousand four hundred and thirty-five men for the land service. The whole estimate amounted to two millions, two hundred and fifty-seven thousand, five hundred and eighty one pounds, nineteen shillings. The money was raised by a land tax of three shillings in the pound, the malt tax, and a lottery for half a million. The bills for the land and malt tax were, both of them, presented and passed in one day; an instance of dispatch, not to be found in any other parliament since the Revolution.

The king, encouraged by the favourable disposition of the two houses, resolved to attempt the execution of a scheme, which he had long been mediating. This was no other than to ease the dissenters of some of those hardships, to which they had been subjected in the late reign. As they had been zealous assertors of the Protestant succession, he thought it but reasonable they should enjoy some indulgence, now that succession was firmly established; and in these

those sentiments he was further confirmed by his own religious principles, which led him to grant a just toleration to all his Protestant subjects.

On the thirteenth day of December, earl Stanhope declared in the house of lords, that, in order to unite the hearts of the well affected to the present establishment, he had a bill to offer under the title of "An act for strengthening the Protestant interest in these kingdoms." It was accordingly read, and appeared to be a bill repealing the acts against occasional conformity, the growth of schism, and some clauses in the Corporation and Test acts.

Earl Stanhope moved that the bill might be read a second time : but this motion was violently opposed. Then his lordship endeavoured to demonstrate the justice and equity of restoring dissenters to their natural rights, and freeing them from the stigmatizing and oppressive laws, which had been made against them in turbulent times, and obtained by unfair and indirect methods, for no other reason, than because they had ever shewn a zealous and firm attachment to the principles of the revolution and the Protestant succession. He urged, that this happy union of all true Protestants, as it would certainly strengthen the reformed
in-

Interest, would rather be an advantage than any prejudice to the church of England, which would still be head of all the Protestant churches; and the archbishop of Canterbury would thereby become the patriarch of all the Protestant clergy.

He was supported by the earls of Sunderland and Stamford, and several other peers; but the Tories to a man, and even some of the Whigs, opposed the project with great vehemence, alledging, amongst other things, that this bill, if passed into a law, instead of strengthening, would certainly weaken the church of England, by plucking off her best feathers, investing her enemies with power, and allowing them to share with churchmen the civil and military employments, of which the latter were then wholly possessed.

Earl Cowper said, that he was for giving the dissenters as much ease as was consistent with the safety of the constitution, and would readily give his vote for repealing the schism act; but that he could not but oppose that part of the bill, by which some clauses of the Test and Corporation acts were to be repealed, because he looked upon those acts as the main bulwark of our excellent constitution in church and state, which ought to be inviolably preserved.

The

The earl of Ilay observed, that though he was educated in a different way from the church of England, yet he could not but disapprove of the bill, because, in his opinion, it broke the *Pacta Conventa* of the treaty of Union, by which the bounds both of the church of England, and of the church of Scotland were fixed and settled: and he was apprehensive, that, if the articles of the union were broke with respect to one church, it might be afterwards a precedent to break them with respect to the other.

The earl of Cholmondeley having moved that the opinion of the bishops should be taken in this important affair, the archbishop of Canterbury stood up and declared, that the acts, which by this bill would be repealed, were the main bulwarks and supporters of the English church: that he had all imaginable tenderness for well-meaning, conscientious dissenters; but he could not help saying, that some of them made a wrong use of the favour and indulgence shewn them at the Revolution, though they had the least share in that happy event: it was therefore thought necessary, by the legislature, to interpose, and put a stop to the scandalous practice of occasional conformity, which was condemned even by the sober part of the dissenters themselves.

He

He was supported by the archbishop of York; but opposed by the doctors Hoadley and Kennet, bishops of Bangor and Peterborough. The former demonstrated the extreme injustice and ill-policy of imposing religious tests, as a qualification for civil and military employments; as it abridged men of their natural rights, deprived the state of the service of many of its best subjects, and exposed the most sacred institutions and ordinances to be abused by profane and irreligious persons. He endeavoured to prove, that the occasional and schism acts were, in effect, persecuting laws; and that, by admitting the principle of self-defence in matters of religion, all the persecutions exercised by the heathens against the professors of Christianity, and even the Popish inquisition, might be justified. With respect to the power, of which some clergymen appeared so fond and so jealous, he owned the desire of power and riches was natural to all men; but he had learned, he said, both from reason and the gospel, that this desire must be kept within due bounds, and not intrench upon the rights and liberties of their fellow creatures and countrymen.

The bishop of Peterborough said, he had observed from history, that the church was most safe and flourishing, when the clergy

did not affect more power than fell to their share, and were tender of the rights and liberties of their fellow-subjects; but that, when the clergy promoted arbitrary measures and persecutions, as some of them did in the reign of Charles the first, they first brought scandal and contempt upon themselves, and, at last, ruin both upon the church and state. He added, that the pretence of the church being in danger, had been often employed to carry on the most wicked designs; and then these words made a mighty noise in the mouths of silly women and children; but that, in his opinion, the church, which he defined to be "a scriptural institution, founded upon a legal establishment," was founded on a rock, and could not be in danger, as long as we enjoyed the light of the gospel and our excellent constitution.

He concluded with observing, that, as the wisdom of Solomon never more eminently appeared, than in discovering the true mother of the child, so their lordships might easily know the reason why some persons spoke with so much tenderness for the acts, which, by this bill, were to be repealed.

After a long debate, the house agreed to leave out some clauses relating to the Corporation and Test acts: then the bill was passed.

passed and sent down to the lower house, where it likewise met with a violent opposition, in spite of which it was carried by the majority.

From the general strain of the king's speech, it might be easily collected, that a rupture with Spain was unavoidable. On the seventeenth day of December, his majesty sent a message to both houses, intimating, that all his endeavours to procure redress for the injuries done to his subjects by the king of Spain, having proved ineffectual, he had found it necessary to declare war against that monarch.

The message being read, a motion was made for an address to the king, assuring him that they would chearfully support him in the prosecution of the war, till Spain should be obliged to accept of reasonable terms of peace, and agree to such conditions of trade and commerce, as the English were entitled to expect by virtue of their several treaties. This was opposed by Mr. Shippen, and some other members, who said that they did not see the necessity of involving the nation in a war, on account of some grievances, of which the merchants complained, as these might be amicably redressed. Mr. Stanhope assured the house, that he had presented five and twenty memorials to the ministry of Spain

on that subject, without success. Mr. Methuen endeavoured to account for the dilatoriness of the court of Spain, in commercial affairs, which, he said, was owing to the different regulations that prevailed in the several provinces and ports of that kingdom.

It was likewise suggested by the members in the opposition, that the ministry had paid very little regard to the trade and interest of the nation; inasmuch as it appeared by the answer of a secretary of state to the letter of the marquis de Monteleone, that they would have overlooked the violation of the treaty of commerce, provided Spain would have accepted the terms of the quadruple alliance: that his majesty did not seek to aggrandize himself by any new acquisitions, but was rather willing to sacrifice something of his own to procure the general quiet and tranquillity of Europe: that no body could tell how far that sacrifice would have extended; but certainly it was a very uncommon stretch of condescension. This alluded to a report which was then current, that the regent of France had offered Gibraltar and Port Mahon to the king of Spain, provided he would accede to the quadruple alliance.

Horatio Walpole alledged, that the disposition of Sicily in favour of the emperor, was a breach of the treaty of Utrecht; and his brother

brother exclaimed against the injustice of attacking a Spanish fleet before a declaration of war. This was answered by Sir Joseph Jekyll, who observed, that, when this affair was first mentioned in the house, he had been backward in giving his opinion, because he had not then had leisure to examine the several steps which had been taken in it; but that he was now fully convinced, that, if there was any injustice, it was on the side of the king of Spain; and that the conduct of his majesty and his ministers, was entirely agreeable to the law of nations, and the rules of justice and equity. "Was it just," added he, "in the king of Spain, to attack, without any formal declaration, the dominions of our ally, the emperor, while engaged in a war with the Turks? Was it just, in the same prince, to invade the dominions of another of our allies, the king of Sicily, without the least provocation? And was it not just in his majesty to vindicate the faith of his treaties, and to defend and protect the trade of his subjects, which had been violently oppressed?" The opinion of this gentleman had a great influence on the members in general: the majority agreed to the address; and such another was carried in the upper house without a division.

The declaration of war, against Spain was accordingly published, with the usual solemnities; but, as the English are seldom fond of a war with that nation, it was not attended with those shouts of joy, which are usual on such occasions.

Mean while, cardinal Alberoni exerted his utmost endeavours to provide against the storm, which he saw gathering round him. He caused new ships to be built, the sea-ports to be put in a posture of defence, succours to be sent to Sicily, and the proper measures to be taken for the security of Sardinia. Conscious, however, that, with all his preparations, he should be utterly incapable to resist the united efforts of the three greatest princes of Europe, he resolved to have recourse to stratagem and intrigues. He, by means of the prince de Cellamare, the Spanish ambassador at Paris, caballed with the malecontents of that kingdom, who were numerous and powerful. A scheme was actually laid for seizing the regent in one of those parties of pleasure, which he frequently made with his mistresses, in the suburbs, and securing the person of the young king.

The duke of Orleans got the first intimation of this plot from king George, who gave him to understand, that a conspiracy

was

was formed against his person and government. This notice, though only general, was of great use. The regent immediately took measures for watching the conduct of all suspected persons; and, in a little time, the whole intrigue was discovered by accident.

The prince de Cellamare intrusted his dispatches, for the greater security, to the abbé Portocarrero, and to a son of the marquis de Monteleone. They set out from Paris in a post-chaise, and were overturned on the road. The postilion observed, that Portocarrero was extremely anxious for the safety of his portmanteau, and heard him say he would not have lost it for a hundred thousand pistoles.

The man, at his return to Paris, informed the government of these circumstances. The Spaniards being pursued, were overtaken and seized at Poitiers, with the portmanteau, in which the duke of Orleans found two letters that made him acquainted with the whole conspiracy. The prince de Cellamare was immediately conducted to the frontiers of the kingdom: the duke and dutchess of Maine, the marquis de Pompadour, the cardinal de Polignac, and many other persons of distinction, were committed to different prisons. The regent declared

war

war against Spain on the twenty-ninth day of December, and an army of thirty thousand men began its march towards that kingdom in January, under the command of the duke of Berwick.

Cardinal Alberoni's intrigues were not confined to France: that minister had likewise projected an invasion of Great-Britain*. The duke of Ormond, repairing to Madrid, held conferences with his eminence, and measures were concerted for raising another rebellion in England.

The pretender quitted Rome by stealth, and embarking at Netuno, landed at Cagliari in the beginning of March. From thence he took his passage to Roses in Catalonia, and proceeded to Madrid, where he was received with great expressions of friendship, and treated as king of Great-Britain. An armament had been equipped of ten ships of war, and a good number of transports, having on board six thousand regular troops, and arms for twelve thousand men.

The command of this fleet was conferred on the duke of Ormond, with the title of captain-general of his most Catholic majesty's forces. He was furnished with a declaration in the name of that king, importing,

ing, that, for many good reasons, he had sent part of his land and sea-forces into England and Scotland, to act as auxiliaries to king James; that what had induced him to take this step, was the certain intelligence he had received, that many inhabitants of the two kingdoms, notwithstanding their strong inclination to acknowledge that prince for their sovereign, durst not openly declare for him, because they did not see him supported by any of the states of Europe, that had either the will or the power to assist him: that, in order to remove this difficulty, he declared he was determined to exert his utmost endeavours for his restoration to the throne of a kingdom, which, he said, belonged to him by undoubted right: that he hoped providence would favour so just a cause; but that the fear of ill success might not deter any person from openly espousing his interest, he promised a safe retreat, in his dominions, to all such as should be obliged to leave their country, on account of the share, which they might bear in this undertaking.

King George having received from the regent of France timely notice of this intended invasion, began to take measures for defeating the project. He issued a proclamation, offering a reward to those, who should

should apprehend the duke of Ormond, or any gentleman embarked in the expedition. He ordered troops to assemble in the North and in the West of England: he demanded two thousand men of the States-General; and he caused a strong squadron to be equipped, in order to oppose the Spanish armament.

His majesty having imparted to both houses of parliament the repeated advices he had received touching the projected descent, they promised to support him against all his enemies. They desired him to augment his forces by sea and land; and assured him they would make good the extraordinary expence. Two thousand men were landed from Holland, and six battalions of Imperialists from the Austrian Netherlands. The regent of France made an offer of twenty battalions; but these it was not thought proper to accept; and indeed, as it fortunately happened, those, that had already arrived, were, in a great measure, useless.

The duke of Ormond sailed from Cadiz, and proceeded with a fair wind as far as Cape Finestre; where his fleet was dispersed and disabled by a violent storm, which entirely defeated the purposed expedition. Two frigates, however, which had sailed from Port-Passage, arrived on the coast of
Scot-

Scotland, with the earls of Marischal and Seaforth, the marquis of Tullibardine, some field officers, three hundred Spaniards, and arms for two thousand men. They were joined by about sixteen hundred Highlanders, and took possession of Donah-castle.

Against these insurgents general Wightman marched with a small body of regular troops from Inverness. They had made themselves masters of the pass of Glenshiel: but at the approach of the king's forces, retired to the pass of Strachel, which they resolved to defend. They were attacked and driven from one eminence to another till night, when the rebels dispersed; and next day the Spaniards surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Marischal, Seaforth, and Tullibardine, with some other officers, retired to one of the western isles, resolving to embrace the first opportunity of making their escape to the continent.

The lords were so highly enraged at the scandalous promotion of peers in the late reign, that they had long been exercising their invention, in order to find out some effectual remedy against the like evil for the future; though the expedient they adopted, seems rather to have been of too selfish and monopolizing a nature.

On

On the last day of February, the duke of Somerset represented in the upper house, that the number of peers being very much encreased, especially since the union of the two kingdoms, it was absolutely necessary to take some steps for preserving the dignity of the peerage, and to prevent the inconveniences which might attend the creation of a great number of peers to answer a present purpose; a measure which had been actually embraced by her late majesty. He therefore moved, that a bill might be brought in to settle and limit the peerage in such a manner, that the number of English peers should not be enlarged beyond six above the present number, which, upon failure of male issue, might be supplied by new creations; and that, instead of the sixteen elective peers from Scotland, twenty-five should be made hereditary, on the part of that kingdom; and that this number, upon failure of heirs male, should be supplied from the other members of the Scottish peerage.

This bill, besides answering its professed purpose, was intended as a restraint upon the prince of Wales, who happened to be at variance with the present ministry. The motion was supported by the duke of Argyll, now lord-steward of the household, the earls of Carlisle and Sunderland. It

was

was opposed by the earl of Oxford, who said, that as it tended to take away the brightest gem from the crown, it was matter of wonder to see it supported by those, who, by the great employments they enjoyed, seemed under the strictest obligation to take care of the royal prerogative: that he therefore apprehended there must be some secret meaning in this motion; but, for his own part, though he expected nothing from the crown, yet he would never give his vote for Jopping off so valuable a branch of the prerogative, as such a restriction would put it out of the power of the king to reward merit and virtuous actions.

The debate was adjourned to the second day of March, when earl Stanhope delivered a message from the king, importing, that as they had under consideration the state of the British peerage, his majesty had so much at heart the settling it upon such a foundation as might secure the freedom and constitution of parliaments in all future ages, that he was willing his prerogative should not stand in the way of so great and necessary a work.

This intimation was followed by another violent debate. Earl Cowper affirmed, that the part of the bill relating to the Scottish peerage, was a manifest violation of

On the last day of February, the duke of Somerset represented in the upper house, that the number of peers being very much encreased, especially since the union of the two kingdoms, it was absolutely necessary to take some steps for preserving the dignity of the peerage, and to prevent the inconveniences which might attend the creation of a great number of peers to answer a present purpose; a measure which had been actually embraced by her late majesty. He therefore moved, that a bill might be brought in to settle and limit the peerage in such a manner, that the number of English peers should not be enlarged beyond six above the present number, which, upon failure of male issue, might be supplied by new creations; and that, instead of the sixteen elective peers from Scotland, twenty-five should be made hereditary, on the part of that kingdom; and that this number, upon failure of heirs male, should be supplied from the other members of the Scottish peerage.

This bill, besides answering its professed purpose, was intended as a restraint upon the prince of Wales, who happened to be at variance with the present ministry. The motion was supported by the duke of Argyll, now lord-steward of the household, the earls of Carlisle and Sunderland. It

was

was opposed by the earl of Oxford, who said, that as it tended to take away the brightest gem from the crown, it was matter of wonder to see it supported by those, who, by the great employments they enjoyed, seemed under the strictest obligation to take care of the royal prerogative: that he therefore apprehended there must be some secret meaning in this motion; but, for his own part, though he expected nothing from the crown, yet he would never give his vote for lopping off so valuable a branch of the prerogative, as such a restriction would put it out of the power of the king to reward merit and virtuous actions.

The debate was adjourned to the second day of March, when earl Stanhope delivered a message from the king, importing, that as they had under consideration the state of the British peerage, his majesty had so much at heart the settling it upon such a foundation as might secure the freedom and constitution of parliaments in all future ages, that he was willing his prerogative should not stand in the way of so great and necessary a work.

This intimation was followed by another violent debate. Earl Cowper affirmed, that the part of the bill relating to the Scottish peerage, was a manifest violation of

the treaty of union, as well as a flagrant piece of unjustice, as it would deprive persons of their right, without being heard, and without any pretence of forfeiture on their part. He urged, that the Scottish peers, excluded from the number of the twenty-five, would be in a worse condition than any other subjects in the kingdom: for they would be neither electing nor elected, neither representing nor represented: a species of oppression, which must certainly inflame them with the highest resentment and indignation, and perhaps might prove the occasion of some dangerous commotion. These objections were over-ruled: resolutions were taken agreeable to the motion; and the judges were ordered to prepare and bring in the bill.

This measure alarmed the generality of the Scottish peers, as well as many English commoners, who saw themselves precluded from the hopes of ever arriving at dignity and title; and they did not fail to exclaim against it, as a violent encroachment upon the constitution of the kingdom. Pamphlets were writ and published on both sides of the question; and a national clamour began to arise, when earl Stanhope observed, in the house, that as the bill had raised strange apprehensions, he thought it
ad-

adviseable to delay the farther consideration of it till a more proper opportunity. It was accordingly dropped, and the parliament prorogued on the eighteenth day of April, when his majesty made a speech to both houses, in which he thanked them for the zeal and affection they had shewn to his person and government during the late projected invasion.

The king having appointed lords-justices to govern the kingdom in his absence, embarked on the eleventh of May for Holland, from whence he proceeded to Hanover, where he concluded a peace with Ulrica, the new queen of Sweden. By this treaty Sweden ceded for ever to the royal and electoral house of Hanover, the dutchies of Bremen and Verden, with all their dependencies: king George engaged to preserve to his new subjects, their rights, privileges, property, and religion, and to discharge the incumbrances of the Swedish crown in those dutchies. He likewise obliged himself to pay a million of rixdollars to the queen

N 2

of

• The lords-justices were, the archbishop of Canterbury, lord-chancellor Parker, the dukes of Kingston, Argyle, (now likewise duke of Greenwich) Newcastle, Bolton, Marlborough, and Roxburgh, the earls of Sunderland, Berkley, and Stanhope, and secretary Craggs,

148 *The History of ENGLAND.*

of Sweden, and to renew, as king of Great-Britain and elector of Hanover, the alliances formerly subsisting between his predecessors and that kingdom. At the same time he mediated a peace between Sweden and his former allies, the Danes, the Russians, and the Poles.

The Czar, however, rejected his mediation, and resolved to prosecute his schemes of conquest. He sent his fleet to the Scheuron or Batses of Sweden, where his troops landed to the number of fifteen thousand men, and committed dreadful ravages; but Sir John Norris, who commanded the British squadron in those seas, having orders to support the negotiations, and oppose any hostilities that might be committed, the Czar, dreading the fate of the Spanish navy, thought proper to recal his fleet.

In the Mediterranean admiral Byng continued with unwearied diligence to assist the Imperialists in finishing the conquest of Sicily. The court of Vienna had resolved to send a strong body of forces to complete the reduction of that island; and the command of this army was entrusted to the count de Merci, an experienced and gallant officer, with whom Sir George Byng conferred at Naples. The admiral supplied them with ammunition and artillery, from the Spanish prizes; he took
the

the whole reinforcement under his envoy, and saw them safely landed in the bay of Patti, to the number of three thousand five hundred horse, and ten thousand infantry.

Count Merci thinking himself a match for the Spanish forces commanded by the marquis de Lede, attacked them in a strong camp at Villa-Franca; and was repulsed with the loss of eight hundred men killed, and two thousand four hundred wounded, himself having received a musket-ball in the reins. Here his army was reduced to great straits for want of provision, and must actually have perished with hunger, had not they been supplied by the English navy.

Admiral Byng was no sooner informed of the misfortune at Villa-Franca, than he embarked two battalions from the garrison of Mellazzo, and about a thousand recruits, whom he sent under a convoy through the Faro to Schiso-bay, to reinforce the Imperial army. He afterwards assisted at a council of war with the German generals, who, in consequence of his advice, laid siege to the town of Messina. Then he repaired to Naples, where he represented to count Gallas, the new viceroy, that, as the attempting the reduction of Sicily and Sardinia at one and the same time would probably be attended with the miscarriage of both

enterprizes, the troops destined for the conquest of Sardinia ought first to be landed in Sicily, and co-operate towards the conquest of that island. The proposal was immediately transmitted to the court of Vienna.

In the mean time the admiral returned to Sicily, and assisted at the siege of Messina. The town surrendered on the eighth day of August, the garrison retired into the citadel, and the remains of the Spanish navy, which had escaped at Passaro, were now destroyed in the mole. The emperor approved of the scheme proposed by the English admiral, to whom he wrote a very gracious letter, acknowledging, with the warmest expressions of gratitude, the important services he had performed to the Imperial family and the common cause, and acquainting him that he had dispatched orders to the governour of Milan, to send the troops designed for Sardinia, to Vado, in order to be transported into Sicily.

As the execution of this affair was a matter of the utmost consequence, the admiral resolved to conduct it in person. Having furnished the Imperial army before Messina with another supply of ammunition, he set sail for Vado, where he overcame numberless difficulties started by the jealousy of count Bonneval, who had been appointed

com-

commander in chief of the forces destined for Sardinia, and was unwilling to see them diverted to another expedition, where he could only act in a subordinate capacity. At length admiral Byng saw the troops embarked, and conveyed them to Messina, the citadel of which surrendered about ten days after their arrival. This conquest, however, was purchased at a dear rate, the Germans having lost no less than five thousand men in the enterprize.

By this time the marquis de Lede had fortified a strong post at Castro Giavanne in the center of the island. The Imperialists could not, with any prospect of success, attack him in this situation; nor could they remain in the neighbourhood of Messina, on account of the scarcity of provisions.

They would therefore have been obliged to abandon the island during the winter, had not the admiral undertaken to convey them by sea to Trapani, where they could enlarge their quarters in a plentiful country, and be better able to annoy the enemy. He not only did them this service, but even supplied them with corn from Tunis at his own expence, as the harvests of Sicily had been gathered into the Spanish magazines. It was the second day of March before the last embarkation of the Imperial troops were

were landed at Trapani. The whole army, being brought together, amounted to fourteen thousand foot, and three thousand cavalry, besides the garrisons of Messina, Melazzo, Syracuse, and other towns in that neighbourhood.

The marquis de Lede, alarmed at the near approach of the Germans, retired to Alcamo, from whence he sent his marshal du camp to the count de Merci and the English admiral, with overtures for evacuating Sicily. The proposal was not disagreeable to the Germans, who would thereby have gained their main point; but Sir George Byng declared, that not a Spaniard should quit the island till the conclusion of a general peace; as he foresaw that these troops, which were the flower of the Spanish army, would be employed either against France or England.

He agreed, however, with count Mercî, in proposing, that, if the marquis would surrender Palermo, and retire, with his forces, into the middle part of the island, they would consent to a cessation of hostilities for six weeks, till the sentiments of their several courts should be known. The marquis consented to surrender Palermo; in consideration of a suspension of arms for three months; but, while this negotiation was depending, he received an express from
 Madrid,

Madrid, acquainting him, that a general peace was concluded. Nevertheless, he broke off the treaty, in consequence of a secret order for that purpose. The reason for this unusual step was, that the king of Spain hoped to procure the restitution of St. Sebastian's, Fontarabia, and other places taken in the course of the war, in exchange for the evacuation of Sicily.

Hostilities were continued, until the admiral received advice from the earl of Stair at Paris, that the marquis de Beretti Landi, the Spanish ambassador at the Hague, had signed the quadruple alliance. By the same courier packets were delivered to the count de Merci, and the marquis de Lede, which last sent a message to the admiral and the Imperial general, importing, that he looked upon the peace as a thing concluded; and was ready to treat about a cessation of hostilities.

To this intimation they made answer, that as the evacuation of Sicily and Sardinia were to be performed within two months, after the signing of the peace, they were ready to consent to a suspension of arms, upon his delivering up the city and castle of Palermo, at which place transports would be best provided, and other necessary measures concerted for the transportation of the Spanish

nish army to their own country. The marquis alledged, that, as their masters were in treaty for settling the terms of evacuating those islands, he did not think himself authorized to agree to a cessation on any other condition, than that each party should remain on the ground they occupied, and expect further orders from their principals.

After a fruitless interview between the commanders at Cassine de Rossignola, the Imperial general resolved to lay siege to Palermo. With this view he decamped from Alcamo on the sixteenth day of April, and followed the marquis de Lede, who retreated before him, and took possession of the advantageous posts that led into the plains of Palermo; but the count de Merci, with surprizing activity, marched over the mountains, while the admiral coasted along shore, attending the motions of the army.

The Spanish general observing the Germans descending into the plain, retired under the cannon of Palermo; and fortified his camp with strong intrenchments. On the second day of May the Imperialists took, by surprize, one of the enemy's redoubts, which commanded the whole line of their camp; and the marquis de Lede ordered all his forces to be drawn out to retake this fortification; both armies were in motion, and

on

on the very point of engaging, when a courier arrived in a felucca with a packet to the marquis, containing full powers to treat and agree about the evacuation of the island, and the transportation of the army to Spain.

He instantly drew off his forces; and sent a trumpet with letters to the general and admiral, acquainting them with the orders he had received. Commissioners were appointed on each side, the negociations begun, and the convention signed in less than a week. The Germans were put in possession of Palermo on the tenth day of May; and the Spanish army marched to Termini, a town on the sea coast, from whence they were transported to Barcelona.

The admiral did not leave the Mediterranean until he had seen the islands of Sicily and Sardinia evacuated by the Spaniards, and the emperor established in the secure possession of the former, and the duke of Savoy in that of the latter; for which purpose four battalions of Piedmontese troops were embarked at Palermo, and sent under a convoy to Caligari in Sardinia.

In a word, admiral Byng bore such a considerable share in this war of Sicily, that the fate of the island depended entirely on his courage, conduct, and activity; the one party acknowledging, that they could not have

have conquered, and the other, that they could not have been subdued without his assistance. When he waited on his majesty at Hanover, he met with a very gracious reception. The king told him, that he had found out the secret of obliging his enemies as well as his friends; for the court of Spain had mentioned, with the warmest expressions of gratitude, his fair and friendly deportment in providing transports and other necessaries for the embarkation of their troops, and protecting them from the oppressions to which they must otherwise have been exposed.

He was appointed treasurer of the navy, and rear-admiral of Great-Britain: in a little time he was ennobled by the title of viscount Torrington: he was declared a privy-counsellor; and afterwards made knight of the Bath, on the revival of that order.

During these transactions in the Mediterranean, the duke of Berwick advanced with the French army to the frontiers of Spain, where he took Fort Passage, and destroyed six Spanish ships of war that were upon the stocks. Then he formed the siege of Fontarabia, which he reduced in June, together with St. Sebastian's and Port-Antonio, in the bottom of the bay of Biscay. In this exploit the French were assisted by two hundred

dred English seamen, who burned two sixty-gun ships unfinished, and a great quantity of naval stores.

The king of England, with a view to revenge himself for the designs formed against his crown and dignity, and indemnify his subjects for the expence of the war, projected the conquest of Corunna in the Bay of Biscay, and of Peru in South-America. Four thousand men, commanded by lord Cobham, were embarked at the Isle of Wight, and sailed on the twenty-first day of September, under the convoy of five ships of war, conducted by admiral Mighels, who was to be joined by captain Johnson, then cruising off Fontarabia.

Instead of making an attempt upon Corunna, they reduced Vigo with very little difficulty: Pont-a-Vedra submitted without resistance: and Redondella was abandoned by the inhabitants. Here they found a great quantity of brass artillery, small arms, and military stores, which had been intended for the invasion of England, and the very troops that garrisoned these places were to have been part of the army destined for the same purpose.

Meanwhile captain Johnson, who had not had an opportunity of joining the admiral, entered the port of Ribadeiro to the eastward

of cape Ortigas, where he destroyed two Spanish ships of war, and made prize of a merchantman; so that the naval power of Spain was entirely ruined. The expedition to the West-Indies was long delayed by contrary winds, and at last prevented by the conclusion of the peace.

Spain, oppressed on all sides, and utterly exhausted by the efforts she had made, now saw the necessity of a speedy pacification. Philip was at length convinced of the madness of Alberoni's projects. That minister had rendered himself odious to the emperor, the king of England, and the regent of France, who unanimously declared they would listen to no proposals, while he should continue in office.

The Spanish monarch, therefore, divested him of all his employments, forbade him to appear any more in his presence, ordered him to depart from Madrid in eight days, and to quit the kingdom in the space of three months. The marquis de Beretti Landi, the Spanish minister at the Hague, delivered a plan of pacification to the States: but it was rejected by the allies; and Philip was at last obliged to accede to the quadruple alliance. The war with Spain, though drawn out to a greater length than is here specified, it was thought proper to comprehend in one general

general view, that the reader might be able to form an idea of the whole, and might not have his attention distracted by foreign affairs, while pursuing the course of the English history.

On the fourteenth day of November, the king returned to England, and on the twenty-third opened the session of parliament with a speech, in which he told them, that all Europe, as well as Great-Britain, was upon the point of being delivered from the calamities of war, by the influence of British arms and councils: that he hoped the commons would concert proper measures for lessening the debts of the nation: that he believed they were all sensible of the many undeserved and unnatural attempts which had been formed against his person and government, since his accession to the throne: that our divisions at home had been magnified abroad; and, by inspiring into some foreign powers a false opinion of our force, had encouraged them to treat us in a manner, which the crown of Great-Britain should never endure, while he wore it: that if the necessities of his government had sometimes engaged them, from motives of duty and affection, to trust him with powers, of which they had always, with good reason, been jealous, the whole world must

acknowledge, that these powers had been so used, as to justify the confidence they had reposed in him; and, as he could truly affirm, that no prince was ever more zealous to encrease his own authority, than he was to maintain the liberty of his people, he hoped they would think of some effectual method to preserve and transmit to posterity, the freedom of our happy constitution, and particularly to secure that part of it, which was most liable to abuse: that, as far as human prudence could foresee, the unanimity of this session of parliament must establish, together with the peace of all Europe, the trade and commerce of these kingdoms, on a lasting foundation: he thought every man might now find an end of all his labours: all he had to ask of them was, that they would agree to be a great and flourishing people, since that was the only means by which he desired to become a happy king.

The addresses of both houses were conceived in the warmest terms of gratitude and affection. They, in particular, thanked him for having interposed in favour of the Protestants of Hungary, Poland and Germany, who had been oppressed by the practices of the Popish clergy; and presented to him memorials containing a detail of their grievances. He and all the Protestant powers

powers warmly interceded in their behalf : favourable answers were returned to their remonstrances ; but the grievances were not redressed.

The peerage-bill was now revived by the duke of Buckingham, and, notwithstanding the vigorous opposition made by several members, passed through the upper house with great dispatch. In the lower house it was supported by Mr. secretary Craggs, who was said to have got a promise of one of the six new peerages. He urged, that his majesty, since his accession to the throne, had had no other view than to promote the happiness and welfare of his subjects, and to preserve their rights and liberties inviolate : that having, in his royal wisdom, considered the abuse, which had been made in the last reign, of that branch of the prerogative, which related to the creation of peers ; an abuse, which had brought the liberties of Great-Britain and of all Europe, into imminent danger, he had, through a condescension worthy of a prince truly magnanimous, been graciously pleased to consent, that such bounds should be set to that part of the prerogative, as might prevent any exorbitant and dangerous exertion of it for the future : that it was only in the reign of good princes, that legislators had opportunities to remedy and amend the defects, to which all human insti-

tutions were subject : and that, if the present occasion of rectifying that apparent flaw in the constitution were lost, it might, perhaps, never be retrieved.

The bill was opposed by Mr. Robert Walpole, who observed, that, among the Romans, the wisest people upon earth, the temple of Fame was placed behind the temple of Virtue, to denote, that there was no coming to the former, without going through the latter ; but, if this bill passed into a law, one of the most powerful incentives to virtue would be taken away, since there would be no coming to honour but through the winding-sheet of an old decrepid lord, and the grave of an extinct noble family : that it was matter of surprize, that a bill of this nature should have been projected, or, at least, promoted by a gentleman, (meaning earl Stanhope) who had, not long ago, sat in the lower house, and who, having now got into the house of peers, would generously shut the door behind him : that this bill would not only be a discouragement to virtue and merit, but likewise endanger the constitution of the kingdom ; for, as there was a due balance between the three branches of the legislature, so, if more weight were thrown into any one of those branches, it would destroy that balance, and consequently

quently subvert the constitution: that the peers were already possessed of many valuable privileges; and to give them more power and authority, by limiting their number, would, in time, bring the commons back to that state of vassalage and dependence, in which they were placed, when they wore the badges of their lords: that he could not but wonder, that their lordships should send down such a bill to the commons, for how could they expect that the commons would give their consent to so injurious a law, by which they and their posterity were to be excluded from the peerage? And how would the lords receive a bill, enacting that a baron should not be made a viscount, nor a viscount an earl, and so upwards? After this, and some other speeches, the bill, as might naturally have been foreseen, was rejected by a great majority.

The next affair, which came before the parliament, was a bill for better securing the dependency of Ireland upon the crown of Great-Britain. This was occasioned by an appeal made by Maurice Annesley, to the house of peers in England, from a decree of the house of peers in Ireland. The British peers reversed the sentence of the Irish lords, and ordered the barons of the exchequer

quer in Ireland, to put Mr. Annesley in possession of the lands he had lost by the decree passed in that kingdom.

The barons obeyed this order; and the Irish house of peers passed a vote against them, importing, that they had acted in derogation to the king's prerogative in his high court of parliament in Ireland, as also of the rights and privileges of that kingdom, and the parliament thereof. They likewise ordered them to be taken into the custody of the black rod; and transmitted a long representation to the king, demonstrating their right to the final judicature of causes in that kingdom.

When this affair came under consideration in the house of lords in England, the duke of Leeds urged fifteen reasons to support the claim of the Irish peers: but the British peers resolved, that the barons of the Exchequer in Ireland had acted with courage, according to law, in support of his majesty's prerogative, and with fidelity to the crown of Great-Britain. They desired the king, in an address, to confer on them some marks of his royal favour, as a recompence for the ill usage they had received, in being unjustly censured, and illegally imprisoned for doing their duty. Finally, they prepared and passed a bill, enacting, that the kingdom

dom of Ireland was subordinate to, and dependent upon, the Imperial crown of Great-Britain, as being inseparably united and annexed to the same: that the king and parliament of Great-Britain had full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the people and the kingdom of Ireland: that the house of peers in Ireland had no right to pass sentence, affirm, or reverse any judgment or decree, given or made in any court in that kingdom: and that all proceedings before the said house of lords, upon any such judgment or decree, were null and void, to all intents and purposes whatsoever. In the lower house, the bill was opposed by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Hungerford, the lords Molesworth and Tyrconnel; but, being supported by Sir Joseph Jekyll, Mr. Yorke, and others, it was carried by the majority, and received the royal assent. *

The king, having recommended to the commons, the consideration of proper means to lessen the national debt, a scheme was now formed for that purpose, by reducing all the public funds into one general stock. The Bank and South-sea company delivered their several proposals to the government.

As

As they expected great profits from the execution of this project, they continued, for some time, to rise in their offers; at last, the South-sea company fairly outbid the Bank; and a bill was ordered to be brought in the lower house, agreeable to the plan presented, by that company.

While this affair was in agitation, the stock of the South-sea company rose from one hundred and thirty, to near four hundred, in consequence of the conduct of the commons, who had rejected a motion for a clause in the bill, to fix what share of the capital stock of the company should be granted to those proprietors of the annuities, who might voluntarily subscribe; or how many years purchase in money they should receive upon subscribing, at the choice of the proprietors.

The bill was vigorously opposed, in the upper house by the lord North and Grey, earl Cowper, the dukes of Wharton, Buckinghamshire and other peers. They urged, that it was unjust in its nature, and might prove fatal in its consequences, as it seemed calculated for the enriching a few, and impoverishing a great many: that it countenanced and authorized the fraudulent and pernicious practice of stock-jobbing, which produced an irreparable mischief

mischief in diverting the genius of the people from trade and industry: that it would give foreigners the opportunity to double and treble the vast sums they had in the public funds; and tempt them to withdraw their capital stock and immense gains to other countries; so that Great-Britain would be drained of its gold and silver: that the artificial and prodigious rise of the South-sea stock was a dangerous bait, which might decoy many unwary people to their ruin; and allure them by a false prospect of gain, to part with the fruits of their industry, to purchase imaginary riches; that the addition of above thirty millions capital would give such vast power to the South-sea company, as might endanger the liberties of the nation, and in time subvert the constitution of the kingdom; for, by their extensive interest, they would be able to influence the elections of the members; and consequently over rule the resolutions of the house of commons: that in all public bargains, those in administration ought to take care, that they be always more advantageous to the public than to private persons; but that a contrary method seemed to have been followed in the contract with the South-sea company; for, should the stocks be kept at the advanced prices, to which they had been raised by the oblique arts of stock-

stock jobbing, either that company or its principal members, would gain above thirty millions, of which no more than one fourth part would be given towards the discharge of the national debts: that the repurchase of annuities would meet with insuperable difficulties; and in that case, none but a few persons, who were in the secret, who had early bought stocks at a low rate, and afterwards sold them at a high price, would be gainers by the project.

The earl of Sunderland answered these objections. He declared, that those, who encouraged the scheme of the South-sea company, had nothing in view but the easing the nation of part of that heavy load of debts, under which it laboured: that the managers for that company had undoubtedly a prospect of gain, either to themselves, or to their corporation; but that, when the scheme was accepted, neither the one nor the other could foresee, that the stocks would have risen to such a height: that, if they had continued as they were, the public would have had the far greater share of the advantage accruing from the scheme; and, should they be kept up to the present high price, as was not unlikely, it was but reasonable, that the South-sea company should enjoy the profits procured to it by the wise manage-

management and industry of the directors, which would enable it to make large dividends, and thereby accomplish the purpose of the scheme. After these and some other speeches, the bill passed without amendment or division; and on the seventh day of April received the royal assent.

By this act the company was declared willing, and was accordingly authorized to take in, by purchase or subscription, the irredeemable debts of the nation, stated at sixteen millions, five hundred and forty-six thousand, four hundred and eighty-two pounds, seven shillings, and one penny farthing, at such times as they should find convenient before the first day of March of the ensuing year, and without any compulsion on any of the proprietors, at such rates and prices as should be agreed upon between the company and the respective proprietors.

For the liberty of taking in the national debts, and encreasing their capital stock accordingly, the company consented, that their present, and to be encreased, annuity should be continued at the rate of five per cent till Midsummer 1727; and from thence be reduced to four per cent, and be redeemable by parliament. In consideration of this and other advantages expressed in the act, the company declared themselves will-

ing to make such payments into the receipt of the Exchequer, as were therein specified, for the use of the public, to be applied to the discharge of the public debts incurred before Christmas 1716.

The sums they were obliged to pay for the liberty of taking in the redeemable debts, four years and a half's purchase for all the long and short annuities that should be subscribed, and one year's purchase for such long annuities as should not be subscribed, amounted, on the execution of the act, to about seven millions. For enabling the company to raise this sum, they were empowered to make calls for money from their members; to open books of subscription; to grant annuities redeemable by the company; to borrow money upon any contract or bill under their common seal, or on the credit of their capital stock, without, however, making any addition to the company's annuities, payable out of the public duties.

It was enacted, that, out of the first monies arising the sums paid by the company into the Exchequer, such public debts carrying interest at five per cent, incurred before the twenty-fifth day of November 1716, founded upon any former act of parliament, as were now redeemable, or might be redeemed before the twenty-fifth day of December

ember 1722, should be discharged in the first place : and that all the remainder should be applied towards paying off so much of the capital stock of the company, as should then carry an interest at five per cent. It was likewise provided, that after Midsummer, 1722, the company should not be paid off in any sums less than one million at a time. Such was the nature of the South-sea scheme, which, however promising in appearance, was afterwards productive of so much mischief to the nation.

The managers of the Royal-assurance and London assurance companies, hearing that the civil list was burdened with too a heavy debt, for which no provision had been made in the South-sea act, offered to the ministry six hundred thousand pounds towards the discharge of these incumbrances, provided they might obtain the king's charter, with a parliamentary sanction for the establishment of their respective companies.

The proposal was accepted ; and the king imparted it in a message to the house of commons desiring their concurrence. A bill was immediately framed and passed, enabling his majesty to grant letters of incorporation to the two companies. It soon obtained the royal assent ; and on the eleventh day of June, the king put an end to the

172 *The History of ENGLAND.*

session with a speech in which he signified his intencion of visiting his German dominions.

By this time an alliance offensive and defensive was concluded at Stocholm, between king George and the queen of Sweden, by which his majesty obliged himself to send a fleet into the Baltic, to act against the Czar of Muscovy, in order to compel him to agree to reasonable terms of peace. The Czar loudly complained of this interposition of king George, alledging, that he had failed in his engagements, both as elector of Hanover, and king of Great-Britain. His resident at London presented a memorial on this subject, which was answered and refuted by the British and Hanoverian ministry. These recriminations served only to exasperate the two princes more violently against each other. The Czar continued to prosecute the war; and at length concluded a peace without a mediator.

Nevertheless, at the instances of king George and the regent of France, a treaty of peace was signed between the queen of Sweden and the king of Prussia, to whom that princess ceded the city of Stetin, the district between the rivers Oder and Pehnne, with the isles of Wollin and Usedom, to be held and enjoyed in the same manner as these provinces

provinces had been transferred by the emperor and empire to the crown of Sweden, by the treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

On the other hand, his Prussian majesty engaged to join the king of Great Britain in his endeavours to effectuate a peace between Sweden and Denmark, and to persuade the Danish king to restore to queen Ulrica that part of Pomerania, which he had seized; he likewise obliged himself to pay to that queen two millions of Rixdollars, in consideration of the cessions she had made.

The treaty between Sweden and Denmark was signed at Frederickstadt on the twenty-second day of June, under the mediation of king George, who became guarantee for the Dane's keeping possession of Sleswick; as the Swedish queen, on account of the strict alliance subsisting between her and the duke of Sleswick-Holstein, could not, with any decency, give up that dutchy in form. Nevertheless the king of Denmark agreed to restore the Upper-Pomerania, the isle of Rugen, the city of Wismar, the towns of Marstrand and Stralsund, and whatever he had taken from Sweden in the course of the war, in consideration of Sweden's renouncing the exemption from toll in the Sound and the two Belts; and paying to Denmark, immediate-

ly after the execution of the cessions, the sum of six hundred thousand rixdollars.

In April Sir John Norris had sailed to the Baltic with a strong squadron, to give weight to the king's mediation. When he arrived at Copenhagen, he wrote a letter to the prince Dalgorouki, the Russian ambassador at the court of Denmark, importing, that the king, his master, had ordered him to come into those seas with a British fleet, to procure a just and reasonable peace between the crowns of Sweden and Russia: and that he and the English envoy at Stockholm were vested with full powers to act, jointly or separately, in quality of plenipotentiaries, in order to effect this agreement, in the way of mediation,

The prince replied, that the Czar had nothing more at heart than peace and tranquillity; and, in case his Britannic majesty had any proposals to make to that prince, he hoped the admiral would excuse him from receiving them, as they might be delivered in a much more compendious way. The English fleet immediately joined that of Sweden as auxiliaries; but they had no opportunity of attacking the Russian squadron, which took shelter in the harbour of Revel.

Though the king had failed in his attempt to effect an accommodation in the North; that

that event was soon brought about by other means. Ulrica queen of Sweden, sister to Charles the twelfth, had married the prince of Hesse, and was extremely desirous that he should be joined with her in the administration of the regal power. In order to accomplish this purpose, she wrote a letter to each of the four states, representing the advantage that would accrue to the public from having the assistance of his royal highness in the government; and expressing her hopes, that they would gratify her so far, as to confer upon him the sovereign authority.

The nobles at first made some opposition; but their scruples being overcome in consequence of a second letter from the queen, the prince was unanimously elected king of Sweden. The new sovereign sent one of his principal officers to notify his election to the Czar, who congratulated him upon his elevation; and this interchange of civilities was the beginning of a negotiation which ended in a peace, and re-established the tranquillity of the North.

On the fifteenth day of June king George set out from England for his electoral dominions; but before his departure from Great-Britain he was reconciled to the prince of Wales, chiefly through the mediation of the duke of Devonshire and Mr. Walpole, who, with

with earl Cowper, lord Townsend, Mr. Methuen, and Mr. Pulteney, were received into favour, and re-associated with the ministry. The earls of Dorset and Bridgewater were advanced to the title of dukes; the lord viscount Castleton was made an earl; Hugh Boscawen was created viscount Falmouth; John Wollop, viscount Lymington; Mathew Ducie Morton and John Barrington of Becket, were both of them promoted to the dignity of barons.

While the king was employed at Hanover in reconciling the interests of the different states of Europe, the South-sea scheme produced a kind of national phrenzy in England. The first hint of the plan seems to have been taken from the famous Mississippi scheme formed by Law, which, in the course of the preceding year, had raised such a ferment in France, and involved many thousand families of that kingdom in utter ruin and destruction. Law's scheme was built upon the grant of an exclusive trade to Louisiana, and, had it been properly conducted, might have been attended with some advantage. The design of it was defeated by the eager avidity of the people, many of whom were reduced to absolute beggary; though the state gained immense profits; no less than fifteen hundred millions of the public

public debts having been transferred from the government to the shoulders of the people.

The South-sea company hoped, that their stock would rise to a considerable height upon the bill's being passed; but finding themselves disappointed in their expectations they propagated a report, that Gibraltar and Portmahon would be exchanged for some places in Peru; by which means the English trade to the South-sea would be protected and enlarged. This rumour, diffused with great industry, inspired the people with the most sanguine and extravagant hopes. In five days after the passing of the bill, the directors opened their books for a subscription of one million, at the rate of three hundred pounds for every hundred pounds capital. Persons of all ranks crowded to the house in such numbers, that the first subscription amounted to above two millions of original stock. In a few days the stock advanced to three hundred and fifty pounds; and the subscriptions were sold for double the price of the first payments.

To enter into a detail of the proceedings, or explain the various and unwarrantable arts that were practised to enhance the value of the stock, and decoy the ignorant and unwary, would be altogether inconsistent with the

the design of a general history, and afford but very little entertainment to the reader : suffice it to say, that, by the promise of larger dividends, and other illegal arts, the stock was raised to above a thousand *per cent.* and the whole nation infected with the spirit of stockjobbing to a surprizing degree.

All distinctions of party, religion, sex, rank, character, and fortune, were swallowed up in this universal concern, or some such pecuniary project. Exchange-alley was filled with a confused crowd of statesmen and mechanics, clergymen and officers, churchmen and dissenters, Whigs, Tories, physicians, lawyers, and even multitudes of females. All other trades and professions were utterly abandoned ; and the people's attention wholly engaged by this and other chimerical schemes, which were distinguished by the appellation of bubbles.

New companies started up every day, under the direction of some of the prime nobility. The prince of Wales was declared governour of the Welch-Coppers company ; the duke of Chandois was placed at the head of the York-building company ; the duke of Bridgewater formed a third, for building houses in London and Westminster. About an hundred such schemes were projected and set on foot, to the ruin of infinite

finite numbers of families. The sums, proposed to be raised by these undertakings, amounted to three hundred millions sterling, which exceeded the value of all the lands in England at twenty years purchase.

The nation was so transported with a spirit of adventure, that people became a prey to the most impudent impostors. An obscure adventurer, pretending to have formed a very advantageous scheme, which, however, he did not think proper to explain, published proposals for a subscription, in which he promised, that, in one month, the particulars of his project should be unfolded. In the mean time he declared, that every person, paying down two guineas by way of earnest, should be intitled to the annual sum of an hundred pounds for every hundred, which he chose to subscribe. In one forenoon this undertaker received a thousand of these subscriptions; and in the evening set out for another kingdom, leaving the subscribers to carry on the project in the best manner they could.

The king before his departure, had published a proclamation against those unlawful projects, and ordered them to be prosecuted as common nuisances; but, notwithstanding this prohibition, they were still carried on with uncommon vigour. In order there-

therefore to put an effectual period to them, the lords justices dismissed all the petitions which had been presented for patents and charters; and the prince of Wales renounced the company, of which he had been elected governour.

The infatuation raised by the South-sea scheme continued to prevail till the eighth day of September, when the stock began to fall. Then did some of the adventurers awake from their golden dream. The number of sellers daily encreased. On the twenty-ninth day of the month the stock sunk to one hundred and fifty: several eminent goldsmiths, and bankers, who had lent great sums upon it, were obliged to shut up shop and abscond: the Sword-blade company, who had hitherto been the principal cash-keepers of the South-sea stock, were forced to stop payment: and now were perceived the first approaches of that general ruin, which, soon after, ensued.

Some of the leading men of the nation, who were deeply concerned in these fraudulent practices, seeing the price of stock sinking daily, employed all their interest with the bank to support the credit of the South-sea company. That corporation agreed, or, more properly speaking, were compelled by the irresistible importunity of the people, to pre-

subscribe into the stock of the South-sea company, valued at four hundred per cent, three millions seven hundred thousand pounds; which the company was to repay to the bank on Lady day and Michaelmas of the ensuing year.

Books were opened at the bank to take in a subscription for the support of public credit; and considerable sums of money were brought in. By this expedient the stock was raised at first, and those, who contrived it, seized the opportunity to convert their shares into cash. But the bankruptcy of the goldsmiths, private bankers, and sword-blade company, occasioned such a run upon the bank, that the money was paid away faster than it could be received from the subscription.

Then the South-sea stock fell again to one hundred and fifty; and the bonds of the company were negotiated at the discount of five and twenty per cent. The directors of the bank finding their property in danger of being swept away by the common deluge, renounced their agreement which they were not obliged to perform; and the South-sea company, being deprived of this support, soon sunk under its own weight.

The ebb of this portentous tide was so rapid and violent, that it bore down every thing

thing in its way; and an infinite number of families were overwhelmed with ruin. Public credit received a terrible shock: the nation was thrown into a dangerous ferment; and nothing was heard but the ravings of grief, disappointment, and despair. Successive expresses were dispatched to Hanover, representing to the king the state of affairs, and earnestly pressing him to hasten his return. He accordingly shortened his intended stay in Germany, and arrived in England on the eleventh day of November.

The parliament meeting on the eighth day of December, his majesty, after having acquainted them with his negotiations abroad, expressed his concern for the unhappy turn of affairs which had so deeply affected the public credit at home; and he earnestly desired them to consider of the most effectual and speedy methods to restore the national credit, and fix it upon a lasting foundation.

Mr. Pulteney having moved for an address, assuring the king, that the commons would proceed, with all possible care, to inquire into the cause of these misfortunes, and apply the proper remedies for restoring and establishing the public credit, Mr. Shippen proposed a clause, importing, that they would do so, as far as was consistent with the

the honour of parliaments, the interest of the nation, and the principles of justice.

He said, that in order effectually to remedy the present misfortunes, it was absolutely necessary to maintain the honour and faith of parliamentary engagements, and to shew the highest resentment against those, who, abusing the trust reposed in them, had given so fatal a wound to public credit, and enriched themselves by the plunder of the nation : that in his opinion, the managers of the South-sea project were not the most criminal, since there were those above them, whose duty it was to overlook and direct their proceeding, and who ought to have given a seasonable check to that extremity of madness, by which the South-sea stock was advanced to such an extravagant price.

He was seconded by lord Molesworth, who observed, that, before they considered of proper remedies, they ought to inquire into the cause and nature of the distemper : that it was with the body politic, as with the body natural ; and they ought, therefore, to imitate skilful surgeons, who, in order to cure a wound, begin with probing it, and, when they find it necessary, make incisions, before they apply healing plaisters ; and that they who followed a contrary method, were but empirics, who, by using pallia-

tives, made the sore fester, and endangered the life of the patient: that he had heard it suggested, indeed, that there was no law to punish the directors of the South-sea company, who were justly considered as the immediate authors of the present misfortunes; but that in his opinion, they ought, on this occasion, to follow the example of the ancient Romans, who having no law against parricide, because they supposed no one could be so unnaturally wicked as to embroil his hands in the blood of his father, made one to punish so heinous a crime the moment it was committed; and adjudged the guilty wretch to be sewn up in a sack, and thrown alive into the Tyber: and that as he looked upon the contrivers and executors of the villainous South-sea scheme, to be the parricides of their country, he should be glad to see them undergo the same punishment.

Sir Joseph Jekyll, who spoke on the same side, declared, that as he doubted not, but, among the South-sea directors, some were innocent, and others criminal, so he was of opinion, there were those who, though not directors, were no less, if not more criminal than the directors themselves, and who therefore deserved an equal, if not a severer punishment: that, upon extraordinary emergencies, where the laws were de-

deficient, the legislative authority might, and ought to exert itself; and he hoped a British parliament would never want power to punish national crimes. The same arguments were enforced by Mr. Nevill, Mr. Pitt, and others.

The clause was opposed by Mr. secretary Craggs, Mr. solicitor York, and Mr. Walpole, now paymaster to the army, who said, that, as to the main drift of the clause proposed by Mr. Shippen, they thought it inconsistent with the rules of prudence, to begin the session with irritating measures: that, if the city of London were on fire, they doubted not, but all wise men would be for extinguishing the flames, and preventing the spreading of the conflagration, before they inquired into the conduct of the incendiaries: that, in like manner, public credit having received a most dangerous wound, and being still in a bleeding condition, they ought to apply to it a speedy remedy; and then they might safely inquire into the cause of the present calamity. The majority acquiesced in these sentiments: the clause was rejected; and the address as moved by Mr. Pulteney presented.

Nevertheless, from these first proceedings of the session it might be easily foreseen, that the commons would not be so favourable

186 *The History of ENGLAND:*

to the ministry, as they had hitherto appeared. The members seemed for once to forget their party distinctions, and unanimously to concur in prosecuting the enemies of their country; though in this pursuit they were actuated by various and even opposite motives.

Many of the commons were sincerely touched with the public calamities, or more deeply affected by their own private losses: others, dissatisfied with the present administration; were glad of an opportunity to gratify their revenge under the specious pretence of justice and equity: some imagined, that, by their vehement declamation, they should attract the notice of the court, and perhaps force themselves into places of trust: others concerned in the fraudulent practices of the South-sea company, believed, that an affected severity was the most effectual means of preventing suspicion of their guilt: and there were not a few, who, under the appearance of indignation against the delinquents, artfully concealed their devoted attachment to some of the principal managers, and endeavoured to procure their being admitted into the committees of enquiry, in order to screen those robbers of the public.

But however different the views of the commons, they all seemed to be equally eager for bringing the authors of the present
mis-

misfortunes to condign punishment. They ordered the directors to produce an account of all their proceedings. Sir Joseph Jekyll moved, that a select committee should be appointed to examine the particulars of this transaction. Mr. Walpole observed, that such a method would protract the inquiry, while the public credit ran the risk of being entirely ruined.

He told the house, he had formed a scheme for restoring public credit; but, as the execution of it depended upon a point, which had been laid as a fundamental principle, he desired, before he would communicate his plan, to know, "whether
" the subscriptions of public debts and in-
" cumbrances, money-subscriptions, and
" other contracts made with the South-sea
" company, should remain in the present
" state?" After a warm debate, the question was carried in the affirmative, with this addition, "unless altered for the ease and
" relief of the proprietors, by a general
" court of the South-sea company, or set
" aside in the due course of law."

Next day, Mr. Walpole produced his scheme, which was, to ingraft nine millions of the South-sea stock into the bank of England, and the like sum into the East-India company, on certain conditions. The
house

house voted that proposals should be received from the bank and those two companies, on this subject; and these being delivered, the commons resolved, that an ingrossment of nine millions of the capital stock of the South-sea company into the capital stock of the Bank and East-India company, as proposed by those companies, would very much contribute to the restoring public credit.

A bill upon this resolution was prepared, passed through both houses, and received the royal assent. Another bill was enacted into a law, for restraining the sub-governour, deputy-governour, directors, treasurer, under-treasurer, cashier, secretary, and accountants of the South-sea company from quitting the kingdom for the space of one year; and for discovering their estates and effects, so as to prevent them from being transported or alienated. A committee of secrecy was chosen by ballot, to examine all books, papers, and proceedings, relating to the execution of the South-sea act.

These points, though carried by a considerable majority, nevertheless met with a warm opposition; particularly from the ministers; who artfully endeavoured to divert the attention of the house, by introducing matters of another nature. On the fourth day

day of January *, Mr. Trevor, secretary at war, moved for a bill to prevent mutiny and desertion. Sir Joseph Jekyll expressed his surprize, that a motion should be made so early for a bill, which seldom used to be brought in till towards the end of the session: that such a hurry seemed only intended to stop an enquiry into the present misfortunes: that they very well knew that "their days were numbered," and that, as soon as they had dispatched the money-bills, and the bill now proposed, they should immediately be sent back to their several habitations.

The lords were no less eager to prosecute the enquiry into this affair; though divers members in both houses was deeply involved in the guilt of the transaction. Earl Stanhope said, the estates of the criminals, whether directors, or not directors, ought to be confiscated to repair the public losses. He was seconded by Lord Carteret, and even by the earl of Sunderland. The duke of Wharton observed, that they ought to proceed in this enquiry without respect of persons: that, for his own part, he would give up the best friend he had, should he be found guilty: that the nation had been plundered in a most flagrant and notorious manner; and,

and, therefore, they ought to make it their first business to find out the offenders, and then inflict upon them the most severe and exemplary punishment.

The sub and deputy-governour, the directors and officers of the South-sea company, being examined at the bar of the house, were, all of them, declared criminal, and severely reprimanded for their unwarrantable conduct. Soon after, a bill was brought in, disabling them to enjoy any office in that company, or in the East India company, or in the Bank of England. Three brokers were examined, and made great discoveries. Knight, the treasurer of the South-sea company, who had been intrusted with the secrets of the whole affair, thought proper to withdraw himself from the kingdom. A proclamation was issued to apprehend him, and another for preventing any of the directors from escaping out of the kingdom.

About this time, the secret committee informed the house of commons, that they had already discovered a train of the deepest villainy and fraud that hell ever contrived to ruin a nation, which, in due time, would be laid before the house; and that, in the mean while, in order to enable them to make farther discoveries, they thought it highly necessary to secure the persons of
some

some of the directors and principal officers of the South-sea company, as well as to seize their papers. In consequence of this intimation, the books and papers of Knight, Surman, and Turner, were ordered to be secured.

The persons of the two last gentlemen, those of Sir George Caswel, Sir John Blunt, Sir John Lambert, Sir John Fellows, and Mr. Grigsby were taken into custody. Sir Theodore Janssen, Sir Robert Chaplain, Mr. Sawbridge, and Mr. Eyles were expelled the house, and imprisoned. Mr. Aislaby resigned his employments of chancellor of the Exchequer, and lord of the treasury; and orders were given to remove all directors of the South-sea company, from the places they enjoyed under the government.

The lords, in the course of their scrutiny, discovered, that large portions of the South-sea stock had been given to several persons in the administration and house of commons, for promoting the passage of the South-sea act. The house immediately resolved, that the taking in or transferring of stock belonging to the South-sea company, or giving credit for the same, without a valuable consideration actually paid, or sufficiently secured; or the purchasing stock by any director or agent of the South-sea company,

pany, for the use or benefit of any person in the administration, or any member of either house of parliament, during the dependence of the bill relating to the South sea company, was a notorious and dangerous species of corruption: that the directors of the South sea company having ordered great quantities of their stock to be bought for the service of the company, when it was at a very high price, and on pretence of keeping up the price of stock; and, at the same time, several of the directors, and other officers belonging to that company, having, in a clandestine manner, sold their stock to the company, such directors and officers were guilty of a notorious fraud and breach of trust; and their so doing was one great cause of the unhappy turn of affairs, that had so much affected public credit. Many other resolutions were taken, in which the unwarrantable practices of the company were severely censured and condemned.

In the beginning of February, the lords proposed to have examined Sir John Blunt, the principal projector of the South-sea scheme, from whom, it was hoped, they should receive great information: but, instead of fulfilling their expectations, he would not so much as be sworn to answer to such interrogations as should be put to him.

He

He alledged, that he had already been examined before the secret committee of the house of commons, and that too concerning such a variety of affairs, that, unless he had a copy of his examination, he could not remember every particular; and as no man was obliged to accuse himself, he could not run the risk of being guilty of prevarication. The lords were provoked at this frivolous excuse; but reflecting, that Blunt might have a design to excite a quarrel between the two houses, they thought proper, for the present, to suppress their resentment.

In the course of the debate on this subject, the duke of Wharton observed, that the government of the best princes was sometimes rendered intolerable to their subjects by bad ministers: he quoted the example of Sejanus, who had caused a division in the Imperial family, and rendered the reign of Claudius odious to the Romans.

Earl Stanhope, considering this reflection as levelled at him, was seized with a transport of anger. He undertook to vindicate the ministry; and spoke with such vehemence as produced a head-ach, which obliged him to retire. He was bled and cupped, and seemed to recover; but next day about six in the evening he fell into a

lethargy, and then into a suffocation, in which he instantly expired. The king deeply regretted the death of this faithful minister, which was the more unfortunate as it happened at such a critical conjuncture; and he appointed lord Townsend to fill his place of secretary. Earl Stanhope was survived but a few days by the other secretary, Mr. Craggs, who died of the small-pox on the sixteenth day of February.

Knight, the treasurer of the South-sea company, being seized at Tirlemont, by the vigilance of Mr. Gaudot, secretary to Mr. Leathes, the British resident at Brussels, was committed prisoner to the citadel of Antwerp. Application was made to the court of Vienna, that he should be delivered up to such persons as might be appointed to receive him; but he had found means to interest the States of Brabant in his favour. They insisted upon their privilege, called, "the joyful entry," granted by the emperor, Charles the fifth, and solemnly recognized by all his successors, that no person, apprehended for any crime in Brabant, should be tried in any other country. Some of the commons expressed their resentment at this frivolous pretence, as they called it: fresh instances were made to the emperor;

peror; and in the mean time Knight escaped from the citadel of Antwerp.

Is it not surprizing, that a nation which had spilled seas of blood in defence of its own liberties, should yet represent the preservation of liberty in another state as a frivolous pretence? can there be a stronger proof, that those, who are most tenacious of their own rights, are yet least tender of those of others, when they happen to interfere with their particular views and interests. The privilege, upon which the Brabantines insisted, might be of more consequence to them, than perhaps any Englishman can well comprehend; and their insisting upon it at that very time, might be indispensably necessary for establishing it upon a solid foundation. The English had been foolish; and therefore to save them from the effects of their folly; or rather to give them an opportunity of punishing the person, who had taken advantage of their folly, the Brabantines must be deprived of their liberties! The maxim is so absurd and ridiculous, that it reflects but little honour upon those, who advanced it. It is not to be doubted, however, but, if application had been made to the States of Brabant, as the emperor proposed, and as probably would have been done, had not Knight escaped, they would have delivered

196 *The History of ENGLAND.*

up the delinquent; after having obtained an assurance from the Imperial court, that this compliance should not be drawn into precedent, nor ever be turned to the prejudice of their liberties.

The committee of secrecy, in the progress of their examination, found many things that were liable to suspicion; others that contained the most evident proofs of iniquity and corruption. In some of the books false and fictitious entries had been made; in others, entries with blanks; in some, entries with razures and alterations; in others, leaves had been torn out; some books had been destroyed; and others secreted. It appeared, that, before any subscriptions could be made, a fictitious stock of five hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds had been disposed of by the directors, to facilitate the passing of the bill.

Great part of this was distributed among the earl of Sunderland, Mr. Craggs senior, the dutchess of Kendal, the countess of Platen and her two neices, Mr. secretary Craggs, and Mr. Aislaby, chancellor of the Exchequer. In consequence of the committee's report, the house came to several severe though just resolutions against the directors and others of the South-sea company; and a bill was prepared for relieving the

the unhappy sufferers out of the estates of the delinquents.

Mr. Stanhope, one of the secretaries of the Treasury, being charged in the report with having large quantities of stock and subscriptions, desired that he might have an opportunity to clear himself. A day was accordingly appointed for that purpose; and, after a full examination of the matter, he was cleared, though only by a majority of three voices.

The case of the earl of Sunderland came next under consideration. Fifty thousand pounds in stock had been taken for his use, without any payment made, or security given. The house entered eagerly into this enquiry, which produced a violent debate. The majority declared him innocent: the public seemed to be of a different opinion. He resigned his place of first commissioner of the treasury, which was bestowed upon Mr. Robert Walpole; but he still retained the confidence of his master.

Mr. Aislabe did not escape so easily. The evidence against him appeared so strong, that the commons resolved, that he had promoted the destructive execution of the South-sea scheme, with a view to his own exorbitant profit, and combined with the directors in their pernicious practices to the ruin of pub-

lic credit. He was expelled the house, and committed to the Tower.

Mr. Craggs, senior, died of the small-pox, before his affair was introduced into the house. Nevertheless, they resolved, that a large quantity of South-sea stock had been held by the company for his use: that he was a notorious accomplice with Robert Knight, and some of the directors, in carrying on their scandalous practices: and therefore, that all the estate, of which he was possessed, from the first day of December, 1719, should be applied towards the relief of the unhappy sufferers in the South-sea company.

The directors, in obedience to the orders of the house, delivered inventories of their estates, amounting to two millions, fourteen thousand pounds, which were confiscated by act of parliament, towards making good the damages sustained by the company, after a certain allowance had been deducted for each, according to their conduct and circumstances. The managers being thus punished by the forfeiture of their fortunes, the house proceeded with the same prudence and moderation, to concert measures for repairing the mischiefs which the scheme had produced.

For

For this purpose they resolved, that towards re-establishing the public credit, relief should be given to the South-sea company, with regard to the payment of the four millions, one hundred and fifty-six thousand three hundred and six pounds, and the four years and a half's purchase on the annuities and other national debts, the company giving such consideration to the proprietors, as the house should think proper: that, in order to put an end to all disputes between the company and the proprietors of the redeemable funds, and of the second, third, and fourth money subscriptions, who had stock allowed them at four hundred per cent. with the Midsummer dividend, an addition of thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eight pence should be given to the proprietors by the company: that the seven millions, payable to the public, by the company, should be divided so, as that, from the twenty-fourth day of June, 1722, two millions of the stock should be annihilated, and a proportionable part of their annuity, or yearly fund, from that time, should cease: that the second subscription of the irredeemables should be made equal to the first, by an addition of stock at one hundred and fifty per cent: that all stock, belonging to the company, which, after the proposed distribution,

hation; should remain undisposed of, should be divided among the proprietors: that such persons as had borrowed money of the company upon South-sea stock, or upon subscription-receipts, should, upon payment of ten per cent. be discharged from all future demands: that all contracts for the sale or purchase of subscriptions, or stock of the South-sea company, which should be unperformed before the twenty-ninth day of September next, should be entered in the books before the first of November, or else be void: that no special bail be required for any action brought upon any contract, since the first day of December, 1719, for the sale or purchase of any subscription or stock: that no execution should be awarded, nor any judgment obtained in any such action, till the end of the session of parliament, which should be next after the twenty-ninth day of September ensuing: that all contracts for the sale or purchase of any subscription or stock, unperformed before the twenty-ninth of September next, where the seller, or person for whose behoof such contract was made, was not, at the time of making such contract, or within a time to be limited, actually possessed of, or entitled to, such subscription or stock, should be declared null and void. These resolutions they pre-

presented, with an address to the king, demonstrating the justice and equity of their proceedings.

In this address, they said, that, when they first entered upon the consideration of this perplexed and important affair, they thought it most advisable to leave every man's property to be determined by the due course of law, and were of opinion, that no relief or abatement could properly be prescribed or given, but from the South sea company; but the discontents of the people daily increasing, and the uncertain and doubtful events, which threatened very large and valuable properties, creating such infinite anxiety and dissatisfaction, as had a general and fatal influence upon all public and private credit, the interposition of parliament became indispensably necessary; and they found themselves obliged to resume the consideration of this nice and intricate affair, and to endeavour to remove, as far as in them lay, the chief and greatest inconveniencies: that the great difficulty in remedying these mischiefs, seemed to arise from the contending interells of those engaged in the South sea company, which rendered it impossible to relieve some, but at the expence of others: that, as all the new proprietors, as well those concerned in the public, as the other
adven-

adventurers, had been equally imposed upon by the artifices of the late directors, and equally drawn in by their own credulity and thirst of gain ; to have discharged any particular set of them, would have been not only an injustice to the rest, but, by dissolving the whole system, would have involved them in utter ruin ; to prevent which, it became absolutely necessary, to make a distribution of losses, and some abatement to every individual : that, indeed, it were very much to have been wished, that such ease could have been given to the proprietors of the public debts, as would have made their property as valuable to them as it had been for many years ; but, as they had voluntarily consented to take stock at some rate or other, even at the time when they saw it raised to the highest pitch, the giving stock at one and the same rate, to them and all others, that were more immediately concerned, made the provision as just and reasonable, as the nature of the thing would admit : that the great and principal mischiefs arose from several concurring circumstances ; from the hard terms of most of the proprietors, occasioned by the high prices at which they had purchased stock, or the excessive rates at which, as well the proprietors of the public debts, as the money subscribers had obliged themselves

themselves to take stock ; from the demand of above seven millions, payable to the public, which could only be raised out of the properties of those, who were already too great sufferers, and which rendered the company incapable of giving them any farther ease or relief ; from the disputes and contests which were preparing to be carried on, not only between the company and the subscribers of the redeemable funds, but between infinite numbers of private persons engaged in contracts for the sale and purchase of stock and subscription ; from the impossibility of the money-subscribers making any farther payments ; from the great loss which the company had sustained by the conduct of the late directors, who had lent out above eleven millions of the company's money, without any, or without sufficient security ; and from the little prospect of recovering any considerable part of that sum ; without which, however, it was impossible for the company to comply with the demand of the public, but at the infinite expence and unsupportable loss of all their adventurers, which must have proved destructive to the trade and credit of the kingdom : that these considerations induced the commons to come to the foregoing resolutions, which they conceived

ceived to be the most proper means to enable the company to give relief to such of their proprietors as most wanted and deserved it; to put an end to all disputes at law; and to fix, settle, and ascertain the several properties and interests of all persons concerned in the South-sea company; to deliver infinite numbers of his majesty's good subjects from the apprehension of vexatious law suits and prosecutions, and from the further demand of such excessive sums of money, as must sink and depress all public and private credit: that, as the greatest mischiefs, of which the nation now so justly complained, had arisen from the unwarrantable methods used by the late directors of the South-sea company, in selling and disposing of such part of their increased capital stock, as belonged to the company; to remove such a foundation of stock jobbing, and to prevent the like fatal consequences for the future, the commons had thought it necessary to take care, that all the increased capital stock belonging to the company, which, after the proposed distribution was made, should remain undisposed of, be divided among all the proprietors of the company, in proportion to their several and respective interests: that these resolutions, if passed into a law, and duly put
in

in execution, would, they humbly hoped, tend very much to the re-establishing of public credit, to the quieting the minds of his majesty's subjects, and contribute to the ease and relief of great numbers of persons; though not sufficient to give satisfaction to, or repair the losses of, all that were unhappily involved in the present calamity: and that, as the ancient usage and established rules of parliament made it impracticable for them to prepare bills for the royal assent, during the present session, for some of the purposes contained in their resolutions, they had humbly presumed to lay the same before his majesty for his royal consideration; not doubting, but that his majesty out of his great wisdom and accustomed grace and goodness to his people, as soon as the public and private bills, now depending in parliament, should be dispatched, would give them an opportunity of perfecting this great and necessary work.

To this address the king replied, that he had such an entire confidence in the parliament's duty and affection to him, and their zeal for the public service, that he should very readily comply with their request, and would soon give them an opportunity of doing what they proposed for settling and establishing the credit of the kingdom. On

the twenty-ninth day of July the parliament was prorogued for two days. Then his majesty going to the house of peers, declared, that he had called them together so suddenly, that they might resume the consideration of the state of public credit.

The commons immediately prepared a bill upon the resolutions they had taken. The whole capital stock, at the end of the year 1720, amounted to above thirty-seven millions, eight hundred thousand pounds: the stock allotted to all the proprietors did not exceed twenty-four millions, five hundred thousand pounds. The remaining capital stock of about thirteen millions, three hundred thousand pounds belonged to the company in their corporate capacity. This was the profit arising from the execution of the South-sea scheme; and out of it seven millions were to be paid to the public.

The present act, in the first place, directed several additions to be made to the stock of the proprietors, out of that possessed by the company in their own right: it made a particular distribution of stock, amounting to two millions, two hundred thousand pounds; and, upon remitting five millions of the seven to be paid to the public, annihilated two millions of their capital.

It

It was further enacted, that after these distributions, the remaining capital stock should be divided among all the proprietors. This dividend amounted to thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eight pence per cent, and deprived the company of eight millions, nine hundred thousand pounds. They had lent above eleven millions on stock unredeemed; of which the parliament discharged all the debtors upon their paying ten per cent. Upon this article the company's loss amounted to six millions, nine hundred thousand pounds; for many debtors refused to make payment. The proprietors of the stock loudly complained of their being deprived of two millions, and the parliament, in the sequel, revived that sum, which had been annihilated. This made an additional dividend of six pounds, five shillings, to every individual.

While this affair was in agitation, petitions from counties, cities, and boroughs, in all parts of the kingdom, were presented to parliament, crying for justice against the villainy of the directors. Pamphlets and papers were published on the same subject; so that the minds of the people were exasperated to the highest pitch of resentment.*

S 2

By


* It was on this occasion that the famous paper of Cato was published, supposed to be wrote by
Mr.

208 *The History of ENGLAND.*

By the wise and vigorous resolutions of the parliament, the South sea company was soon enabled to fulfil their engagements with the public: the ferment of the people gradually subsided; and the credit of the nation was finally restored.

The rapid circulation of money, the sudden elevation of persons of the meanest rank, and the almost total dissolution of property, occasioned by this wicked and infamous scheme, introduced a surprizing profligacy of life and manners. The adventurers, intoxicated by their imaginary wealth, gave full scope to the gratification of their criminal passions, and indulged themselves, without restraint, in all kinds of unlawful pleasure. Some of the more abandoned among them formed a society, called, "The hell-fire club," the members of which are said to have been guilty of all the extravagancies,
of

Mr. Gordon. About the same time Mist, the publisher of a weekly journal, for some reflections thrown on the king touching his interposition in favour of the German Protestants, was sentenced to stand in the pillory, to pay a fine of fifty pounds, to suffer three months imprisonment, and to find security for his good behaviour. His journal was afterwards carried on under the title of *Fog's*, and again underwent the censure of parliament; notwithstanding which, it was continued for several years longer.



of which the Mohocks were barely suspected.

The earl of Nottingham complained, in the house of lords, of the growth of atheism, profaneness, and immorality; and a bill was brought in for suppressing blasphemy and profaneness. It contained several articles, which though seemingly calculated to answer the professed purpose of the bill, were really intended to restrain the liberty lately granted to Nonconformists: and therefore met with a vigorous opposition.

It was supported by the archbishop of Canterbury, the earl of Nottingham, the lords Bathurst and Trevor, the bishops of London, Winchester, and Litchfield and Coventry. One of them said, he verily believed the present calamity, occasioned by the South-sea project, was a judgment of God on the blasphemy and profaneness of the nation. Lord Onslow replied, "that noble peer must then be a very great sinner, for he had lost considerably by the South-sea scheme." He added, that he was as much against blasphemy, as any member of the house; but should be sorry to see it restrained by a law, that was evidently of a persecuting nature, and even favoured of a Spanish Inquisition.

The duke of Wharton, who was alike remarkable for his wit and profligacy, said, he

he was not insensible of the common opinion of the town concerning himself; and gladly laid hold of this opportunity to vindicate his character, by declaring, that he was far from being a patron of blasphemy, or an enemy to religion: that, nevertheless, he could not but oppose this bill, because he conceived it to be repugnant to the holy scripture. Then pulling out of his pocket an old family bible, he quoted, with great gravity, several passages from the epistles of St. Peter and St. Paul; concluding, that the bill ought to be thrown out. He was seconded by the duke of Argyle, the earls of Sunderland and Ilay, earl Cowper, and lord Townsend.

The earl of Peterborough declared, that, though he was for a parliamentary king, he did not desire a parliamentary god, or a parliamentary religion; and should the house give their votes for one of this kind, he would go to Rome, and endeavour to be chosen a cardinal; for he had rather sit in the conclave than with their lordships upon those terms. After an obstinate debate, the bill was postponed to a long day, by a majority of twenty-nine voices.

The supplies in this session were voted very late; nor, even at length, were they granted with the usual chearfulness and alacrity.

crity. The king, sensible of the ill humour of the nation, which he was unwilling to encrease, thought proper to omit several particulars in his speech, which he afterwards communicated to the house in separate messages. On the sixteenth day of June he acquainted the commons, that he had agreed to pay a subsidy to the crown of Sweden, and hoped they would enable him to make good his engagements.

This intimation produced a violent debate. The leaders of the opposition desired to know whether this subsidy, amounting to seventy-two thousand pounds, was to be paid to Sweden, exclusive of the expence of maintaining a strong fleet in the Baltic.

The lord Molesworth observed, that he would go as far as any man in supporting the dignity of the crown of Great-Britain; but that, on the other hand, he was not for squandering away unnecessarily the small remainder of the wealth of the nation: that, by our late conduct, we were become the allies of the whole world, and the bubbles of all our allies; for we were obliged to pay them well for their assistance. He affirmed, that the treaties, which had been made with Sweden, at different times, were partly inconsistent and contradictory: that our late engagements with that crown were,
in

212 *The History of* ENGLAND.

in some measure, contrary to the treaties subsisting with Denmark; and entirely opposite to the measures formerly concerted with the czar of Muscovy: that, in order to engage the Czar to yield what he had gained in the course of the war, the king of Prussia ought to give up Steuin, and the elector of Hanover restore Bremen and Verden: that the distressed condition, to which the Swedes were reduced, was indeed worthy of compassion; but it must be considered, that they had, in a great measure, been the authors of their own misfortunes, by their tame submission to a despotic, tyrannical prince, and by sacrificing their whole substance to enable him to carry on his unjust, rash, and ambitious projects; and that any nation, who followed their example, deserved most richly to share the same fate: that, after all, England had no business to intermeddle with the affairs of the empire: that we reaped little or no advantage by our trade to the Baltic, but that of procuring naval stores: that hemp, he owned, was a very necessary commodity, particularly at this juncture; but that, if proper encouragement were given to some of our plantations in America, we might be supplied from thence at a much cheaper rate than from Sweden and Norway. These objections

jections were answered by Mr. Walpole and his brother, Mr. Lechmere, Lord Barrington and others; and at last the subsidy was granted by a considerable majority.

In about three weeks the commons were informed, by a second message, that the debts of the civil list amounted to five hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and his majesty hoped they would empower him to raise that sum upon the revenue, as he proposed it should be replaced to the civil list, and reimbursed by a deduction from the salaries and wages of all officers, and the pensions and other payments from the crown.

Mr. Shippen observed, that this was a very new and unusual method of asking money, not from the throne, and at the beginning of a session, as had always been the custom in former reigns; but by a message, towards the end of the session, when most of the members were gone home. He desired the gentlemen to look round the house, and see how few members were present, when a matter of this consequence was to be debated. He remarked, that, besides the unseasonableness of the time, the message was no less extraordinary in another particular: the ways and means, he said, of raising supplies had always been left to the direction of the
com-

commons: but, in the present case, not only the sum, but the manner of raising it, was pointed out to them, which was reducing the house to the level of a parliament of Paris. He added, that, if things were brought to this pass, it would be easy for any king, whenever he pleased, to usurp an arbitrary power, and to render himself absolute master of the liberties and property of his subjects. He concluded with the saying, that, he was sure, the gentleman, who had advised his majesty to ask this sum in such an unprecedented manner, would have opposed the motion with all his might about two years ago; but it was usual for men's opinions to vary with their interests. Notwithstanding these and other arguments of the like nature, the king's request was granted; and, at the same time, an act passed for a general pardon.

On the tenth day of August his majesty closed the session with a speech, in which he declared, that he entertained a most sincere concern for the sufferings of the innocent, and a just indignation against the guilty, in the affair of the South-sea scheme; that he had readily given his assent to such bills, as they had presented to him, for punishing the authors of the late misfortunes, and for obtaining restitution and satisfaction to those
who

who had been injured by them in such a notorious manner: that they could not fail to have observed, that the discontents, occasioned by this unhappy event, had been industriously fomented and inflamed by wicked and seditious libels; but he doubted not, but by their prudent conduct in their several counties, all the enemies of his government who flattered themselves with the prospect of blowing up the present complaints into popular disaffection, would be finally disappointed in their designs and expectations.

The Jacobites had been so very complainant as to insinuate, that the king was not free from connexions with the projectors of the South-sea scheme; that it was at his desire, the emperor had refused to deliver up Knight; and that he secretly favoured the directors and their accomplices. It was in order to refute those injurious aspersions, as well as from a real detestation of the villainy of the delinquents, that his majesty expressed himself with so much warmth on this occasion.

The lords Townsend and Carteret were now appointed secretaries of state; the earl of Illy was constituted keeper of the privy-seal of Scotland; and the earl of Bute admitted a lord of the bed-chamber. On the
thirteenth

thirteenth day of June, the treaty of peace between Great Britain and Spain was signed at Madrid. The contracting powers engaged to observe the regulations, relating to commerce, which had been fixed and settled by former treaties; and to restore mutually all the effects seized and confiscated in the course of the present war. In particular the king of England promised to restore all the ships of the Spanish fleet, which had been taken in the Mediterranean, or the value of them, if they were sold. He likewise promised, in a secret article, that he would no longer interfere in the affairs of Italy; and the king of Spain made an absolute cession of Gibraltar and Portmahon.

On the very same day, a defensive alliance was concluded between Great Britain, France, and Spain. All remaining difficulties were referred to a congress at Cambray, where they hoped to establish a general peace, by determining all differences between the emperor and his Catholic majesty. In the mean time the powers of Great Britain, France, and Spain, engaged, by virtue of the present treaty, to grant to the duke of Parma, in consideration of the friendly disposition he had always shewn towards them, and as a mark of their singular esteem

esteem and affection for his highness, a particular protection for the preservation of all his territories and rights, and for the support of his dignity.

The congress at Cambray was opened; but the demands on both sides were so high, that no accomodation could be effected. In the mean time, the peace between Russia and Sweden was concluded under the mediation of France. The Czar was allowed to retain Livonia, Ingria, Estonia, part of Carrelia, and of the territory of Wyburg, Riga, Revel, and Narva, in consideration of his restoring part of Finland, and paying two millions of Rixdollars to the king of Sweden.

In this treaty the Czar consented, that the differences between him and the king of Great-Britain should be adjusted in an amicable manner. Notwithstanding these friendly professions, the animosity subsisting between these two princes seemed rather to encrease. Bastugef, the Russian resident at London, having presented a memorial that contained some unguarded expressions, was ordered to quit the kingdom in a fortnight. The Czar delivered a declaration to the English factory at Peter-sbourg, importing, that this outrage ought naturally to have engaged him to use reprisals

fals ; but, as he perceived it was done without any regard to the concerns of England, and only in favour of Hanoverian interest, he was unwilling, that the English nation should suffer for a piece of injustice, in which they had no share ; and that he therefore granted to them all manner of security, and free liberty to trade in his dominions. To finish this long catalogue of negotiations, king George concluded a treaty with the Moors of Africa, against which the Spaniards, who were then at war with that people, loudly exclaimed.

In the course of this year pope Clement, the eleventh, died ; and was succeeded by Innocent the thirteenth, of the family of Conti. On the fifteenth day of April, the princess of Wales was delivered of a prince, baptized by the name of William Augustus, now duke of Cumberland.

A dreadful plague having lately broke out in the southern parts of France, a proclamation was published, forbidding any person to come into England, from any part of that kingdom, without certificates of health. The streets of London were ordered to be paved and kept clean. An act of parliament had passed in the preceding session for preventing infection, by building pest-houses : to which all infected persons, and

and persons of an infected family; should be removed; and by drawing trenches and lines round any city, town, or place infected.

The parliament assembling on the nineteenth day of October, the king in his speech to both houses, observed, that the peace of the North was now re-established by the conclusion of the treaty between Russia and Sweden: that he hoped the house of commons would consider of means for easing the duties upon the imported commodities used in the manufactures of the kingdom; that, in his opinion, the nation might be supplied with naval stores from our own colonies in North America: and that their being employed in this useful and advantageous branch of commerce would divert them from setting up manufactures, which directly interfered with those of Great Britain: that, with respect to the supplies, he begged his people might reap some immediate benefit from the present circumstances of affairs abroad: and that he thought it his duty to recommend, to their serious consideration, the most effectual means for preventing the plague, particularly by providing against the pernicious practice of smuggling. Both houses presented an address, in which

they assured him they would proceed, with unanimity and dispatch, in considering the several matters recommended from the throne.

One of the first objects that engaged the attention of the upper house was Law, the famous projector. Upon the miscarriage of his Mississippi scheme he had been obliged to leave France, in order to avoid the resentment of the people, who had, more than once, made an attempt upon his life. He retired to Italy ; was said to have visited the Pretender at Rome, from whence he repaired to Hanover ; and returned to England from the Baltic, in the fleet commanded by Sir John Norris. The king admitted him to a private audience : he kept open house ; and was visited by great numbers of persons of quality and distinction.

These circumstances gave so much umbrage, that earl Coningsby, in the house of lords, declared he could not but entertain some jealousy of a person, who had done so much mischief in a neighbouring kingdom ; and who, being immensely rich, might do a great deal of hurt here, by tampering with those who were become desperate, in consequence of being involved in the calamity occasioned by the fatal imitation of his pernicious projects : that, in his conception, this person was the more dangerous

gerous, as he had renounced his affection to his native country, his allegiance to his lawful sovereign, and his religion by turning Roman Catholic. He therefore moved, that enquiry might be made, whether Sir John Norris had orders to bring him to England.

Lord Carteret replied, that Mr. Law had, many years ago, the misfortune to kill a gentleman in a duel; but that, having at last received the benefit of the king's clemency, and the appeal lodged by the relations of the deceased being taken off, he was come over to plead his majesty's pardon. He added, that there was no law to keep any Englishman out of his own country; and, as Mr. Law was a subject of Great Britain, it was not even in the king's power to hinder him from coming over. After some debate the matter was dropped; and Law, attended by the duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay, pleaded his pardon in the King's Bench, according to form.

The next affair that came under the consideration of the parliament, was the state of the navy debt, which was increased to one million, seven hundred thousand pounds. In the lower house, Mr. Shippen alledged, that such extraordinary expence could not be for the immediate service of Great Britain; but, in all probability, for the pre-

servation of foreign acquisitions. Sir Joseph Jekyll said, he was not against providing for any just public debts; but that, in his opinion, they could not answer it either to themselves, or to those they had the honour to represent, if they gave away the nation's money blindfold: he therefore desired, that the house might be informed how so great a debt came to be contracted.

Mr. Walpole replied, that nothing in the world could be more reasonable; and therefore he seconded the motion for having a particular account of the debt laid before the house; but, in the mean time, he would assure them, that near eleven hundred thousand pounds of it was contracted in the last reign; and that as the persons now in the administration could not be answerable for that part of the debt, neither did they desire that above one million of it should be provided for in the present session. This motion was carried without a division.

The same subject was debated with no less warmth in the upper house. The earl of Rochester observed, that, since the debt was incurred, it was but reasonable, that those, who had trusted the public should be paid; but that, on the other hand, it became the wisdom of that house, to endeavour to prevent the like inconvenience for
the

the future, and to restore the navy to its ancient footing, by restricting it to the expences provided for by parliament. He therefore moved, that an address should be presented for that purpose.

The motion was opposed by the earl of Hay, who urged, that, as the public good, and the safety of the nation, was the grand object and rule of government, some latitude must necessarily be given, and some allowance be made, to those, who were in the administration, for extraordinary expences, upon unforeseen emergencies : and that, therefore, if the ministers gave, as they had promised, a satisfactory account, how the debt in question came to be contracted, there was, in his opinion, no occasion for such an address. He was supported by lord-chancellor Parker, and others ; and, at last, the motion was rejected by a great majority.

As the debts of the navy were, in some measure, owing to the war with Spain, the enquiry into the former, naturally led to a discussion of the latter. The debate was opened by the duke of Wharton, who animadverted upon the conduct of the ministers, both with regard to the war and peace with Spain, and moved, that the treaty with that crown should be submitted to the inspection of the house.

The

The earl of Sunderland said, that he doubted not, but his majesty would be always ready to comply with the desires of that house, and even in this particular, as well as in others; but that, for his own part, he would be so free as to declare, that he would never address his majesty to communicate the treaty in question, at this juncture, because, to his knowledge, it contained a secret article, which the king of Spain had desired might not be made public, till after the conclusion of the treaty of Cambray; and, as his majesty had granted that request, he hoped the house would not desire him to violate his promise. This reason was deemed satisfactory, and the duke's motion was accordingly rejected.

The earl of Strafford asserted, that, as the war with Spain had been undertaken without any necessity or just provocation, so the peace was concluded without any benefit or advantage: that, contrary to the law of nations, the Spanish fleet had been attacked without any declaration of war, even while a British minister, and a secretary of state, were treating amicably at Madrid: and that, as the manner of beginning the war seemed altogether unjustifiable, so neither could the war itself be easily reconciled with sound politics, since it interrupted one of the most valuable

valuable branches of the English commerce, at a time when the nation groaned under the pressure of heavy debts, occasioned by a former long and expensive war. He therefore moved for an address to his majesty, desiring that the instructions to Sir George Byng, now lord Torrington, should be laid before the house. This motion was likewise rejected; and a protest entered by the lords in the opposition. Nevertheless the house voted an address, to know in what manner the king had disposed of the ships taken from the Spaniards.

The bill for preventing infection was also the occasion of some dispute. Earl Cowper represented, that the removal of persons to a Lazaret, or Pest-house, by the order of the government, and the drawing lines and trenches round places infected, were powers unknown to the British constitution, inconsistent with the lenity of a free government, and such as could never be wisely or usefully put in practice; and the more odious because they seemed to be copied from the arbitrary government of France, and could never be executed but by military force. These obnoxious clauses were accordingly repealed, though not without a violent opposition.

Indeed

Indeed, in this particular, the earl's notions of liberty seem rather to have been somewhat romantic and chimerical; for, if measures may not be taken to prevent the spreading of such a dreadful contagion, then there is an end of all regular government.

The English, having lately built some ships for the French, complaint of this matter was made in the house of lords, where it was alledged, that the practice of building ships for foreigners might be attended with very ill and dangerous consequences; for, as such foreigners, though at present in amity with us, might yet, at one time or other, become our enemies, they would, in such a case, make use of those very ships to fight against us: that, besides this general consideration, the present scarcity of timber in England made such a practice the more unjustifiable, especially, if it was remembered, that a great number of ships had lately been built for the French, some of them of sixty, and others of seventy guns.

To this it was answered, that there was no law in being to hinder any ship-carpenter from working for any one that would employ him: that the French indeed, though now in amity with us, might one day be our enemies; but yet, if they built not such ships here as they happened to want, they
might

might have them built in Holland or at Hamburgh; and it could not be denied, that it was better for the English to get this money, than suffer it to go to other nations: that, were it in our power, indeed, to hinder the French from building ships at all, it would be prudent to do it; but, since they could have them in other places, the prohibiting them to purchase ships here, would be rather detrimental than advantageous to the nation.

After these and some other speeches, the house agreed to consult the judges, all of whom, except baron Montague, (who desired longer time to consider) declared; that they knew of no law, by which the king was empowered to hinder any of his subjects from building ships for any persons, whether natives or foreigners, that would employ them. Earl Cowper said, that if there was no such law, it was high time there should be one; to put a stop to such pernicious practices for the future. He therefore moved, that the judges might be ordered to bring a bill for that purpose. But, after some disputes about the nature of the bill, the consideration of it was postponed, and never after resumed.

The

• A. D. 1722.

The Quakers presented a petition to the house of commons, praying, that a bill might be brought in, for omitting, in their solemn affirmation, the words, "In the presence of Almighty God;" the house complied with their request: but the bill gave rise to a warm debate among the peers. Dr. Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, said, he did not see why such a distinguishing mark of indulgence should be shewn to a set of people who were hardly Christians.

He was supported by the earl of Strafford, the lord North and Grey, and the archbishop of York; which last delivered a petition from the London clergy, representing, that, as the bill might, in its consequences, nearly affect the property of the subject in general, so would it, in an especial manner, endanger the maintenance of the clergy by tithes, inasmuch as the people, called Quakers, pretend to deny the payment of this tax, upon a principle of conscience; and, therefore, might be under strong temptations to ease their consciences in that respect, by violating them in another, when their simple affirmation, in behalf of friends of the same persuasion, should pass in all courts of judicature, as legal evidence: that, moreover, the bill seemed to imply, that justice might be duly administred, and government supported,

ported, without the intervention of any solemn appeal to God, as a witness of the truth of what was said, in all cases of great importance to the common-weal; whereas the petitioners were firmly persuaded, that an oath was instituted by God himself, as the surest bond of fidelity among men, and had been esteemed and found to be such, by the wisdom and experience of all nations in the world: that, nevertheless, what chiefly moved the petitioners to apply to their lordships, was their serious concern, lest the minds of good men should be grieved and wounded, and the enemies of Christianity triumph, when they should see such condescension shewn by a Christian legislature, to a set of men, who renounce the divine institutions of Christ; particularly that, by which the faithful are initiated into his religion, and denominated Christians: and that, finally, it deserved their lordships most mature deliberation, whether such an extraordinary indulgence granted to a people already, as was conceived, too numerous, might not contribute to multiply that sect, and tempt many persons to profess themselves Quakers, in order to be exempted from the obligation of oaths, and enjoy a privilege not allowed to the best Christians in the kingdom. This petition, coming from the London clergy,

ought, regularly, to have been presented by the bishop of that diocese, or the archbishop of Canterbury; and could not, with any propriety, be delivered by the archbishop of York: the reading of it was therefore rejected by a very great majority.

As the liberty of protesting had, of late, been very much abused, the house resolved, agreeable to a motion made by the earl of Sunderland, that such lords, as might enter protestations with reasons, should do it before two o'clock on the next sitting day, and sign them before the house rises.

The supplies being granted, and the business of the session finished, the king came, on the seventh day of March, to the house of peers, where, in a short speech, he observed, that he could not, in justice, part with this parliament, without returning them his sincerest thanks for their steady and resolute adherence to his person and government, and to the interest of the Protestant cause, both at home and abroad: that the enemies of their country had borne this strongest and most honourable testimony to their behaviour in these particulars, by the implacable malice, which they had, on all occasions, expressed against them: that the parliament could not fail to be sensible, that these men were, at this very juncture, re-

viving,

living, with the greatest industry, the same wicked arts of calumny and defamation, which they had formerly practised, and which had ever been the constant prelude to public troubles and disturbances; and, such was their insatiation, that they flattered themselves the grossest misrepresentations would turn to their advantage, and give them an opportunity of recommending themselves to the favour and good opinion of his people; but he had so just a confidence in the affections of his subjects, and in their regard for their own welfare, that he was persuaded they would not suffer themselves to be deceived and betrayed to their own destruction: that, for his own part, as the preservation of the constitution in church and state should always be his chief care, he was firmly determined to continue to countenance such, as had manifested their zeal and attachment to the present establishment, and their regard for the civil and religious liberties of all his subjects; and he questioned not, but that behaviour, which had so justly recommended them to him, would effectually secure to them the good will of all who wished well to his government, and would convince the world how ill grounded were the expectations of those, who hoped to prevail with a free and Protestant people, to give up

232 *The History of* ENGLAND.

their religion and liberties to such as were inveterate enemies to both.

After this speech the parliament was prorogued to the fifteenth day of March: but, before that period, it was dissolved by proclamation, and writs were issued for convoking another. In the new elections, the two parties exerted themselves with unwearied diligence; but the Whigs, by their superior interest, easily gained an incontestable majority.

The

The earl of Sunderland died on the nineteenth day of April, after having incurred a great load of popular odium, from his supposed connexions with the directors of the South-sea company. He was a minister of abilities, but rash, headstrong, and impetuous. He was survived but a few weeks by his father-in-law, the duke of Marlborough, who died on the sixteenth day of June, and was interred with great funeral pomp in Westminster-Abbey. The character of this nobleman may be but learned from the history of his actions, which make too considerable a figure in the English history, either to need or admit of particular recapitulation.

The close of the preceding year was distinguished by the death of John Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, whose epitaph, composed by himself, though not quite orthodox, is so curious as to deserve a place in this history. It was expressed in the following terms:

Pro Rego Scæpe, pro Republicâ semper; dubius non improbus, vixi. Incertus, nec perturbatus, morior. Cbristum veneror. In Deo confido æterno ac omnipotente, ENS ENTIIUM MISERERE MEI!

About

The suspicions which the king had intimated, in his speech to the parliament, soon appeared to be too well founded. The discontents raised by the South-sea scheme, had inspired the Jacobites with such sanguine hopes, that, though unable to procure the assistance of any foreign power, they resolved, once more, to attempt, by their own strength, their favourite design of advancing the pretender to the throne of Great-Britain.

In the beginning of May, his majesty received, from the duke of Orleans, full and certain information of a fresh conspiracy against his person and government. A camp was immediately formed in Hyde Park. All military officers were ordered to repair to their respective commands. Lieutenant-general Maccartney was dispatched to Ireland to bring over some troops from that kingdom. Some suspected persons were apprehended in Scotland: the States of Holland were desired to have their auxiliary or guaranty troops in readiness, in case of necessity; and colonel Churchill was sent to the court of France with a secret commission.

U 3

The

About the same time died Matthew Prior the poet, for whom a monument was erected in Westminster-Abbey.

234 *The History of ENGLAND.*

The apprehensions, raised by this plot, affected, in some measure, the public credit. South-sea stock began to fall, and the timorous and disaffected made a run upon the Bank. The lord Townsend wrote a letter to the mayor of London, by the king's command, acquainting him with his majesty's having received repeated and unquestionable advices, that several of his subjects had entered into a wicked conspiracy, in concert with traitors abroad, for raising a rebellion in favour of a Popish pretender; but, he was firmly assured, the authors of it neither were, nor would be supported by any foreign power: and expressing his hope, that his lordship would, in conjunction with the other magistrates of London, exert his authority, at so important a conjuncture, for the preservation of the public peace, and the security of the city. This letter was immediately answered by a very warm and affectionate address from the court of aldermen, who expressed their utter abhorrence and detestation of the treacherous designs of the disaffected; and the example of London was followed by many other cities and boroughs. The king had determined to visit Hanover, and actually settled a regency, in which the prince of Wales was not included: but now this intended journey was postponed: the
court

court was removed to Kensington; and the prince of Wales retired to Richmond.

The bishop of Rochelle having been seized with his papers, was examined before a committee of the privy-council, who committed him to the Tower for high-treason. The earl of Orrery, with his secretary, the lord North and Grey, Mr. Cochran and Mr. Smith from Scotland, Mr. Layer and Mr. Sayer, two gentlemen of the Temple, were confined in the same place. Mr. George Kelly, an Irish clergyman, Mr. Robert Cotton of Huntingdonshire, Mr. Bingley, Mr. Fleetwood, Neynoe, an Irish priest, and several other persons were taken into custody: and Mr. Shippen's house was searched.

After bishop Atterbury had remained a fortnight in the Tower, Sir Constance Phipps presented a petition to the court at the Old Bailey, in the name of Mrs. Morrice, that prelate's daughter, praying, that, in consideration of the bishop's ill state of health, he might either be brought to a speedy trial, bailed, or discharged: but this was rejected, as were likewise two other petitions in favour of Cochran and Kelly. The imprisonment of a bishop afforded a fine handle to the Jacobites, who did not fail to improve it, with great industry, in inflaming the jealousies and discontents of
the

the people. The high-flying clergy exclaimed against it as an outrage upon the church, and the episcopal order; and they had even the assurance to offer up prayers for the bishop's health, in several of the churches and chapels of London. In the mean time, the king, attended by the prince of Wales, made a summer-progress through the western counties.

The new parliament being assembled, on the ninth day of October, the king, in his speech to both houses, told them, that he was extremely sorry to find himself obliged, at the opening of the first session, to acquaint them, that a dangerous conspiracy had been for some time formed, and was still carrying on against his person and government, in favour of a Popish pretender: that the discoveries he had made at home, the informations he had received from abroad, had given him the most ample and concurrent proofs of this wicked design: that the conspirators had, by their emissaries, made the strongest instances for succours from foreign powers, but were disappointed in their expectations: that, nevertheless, confiding in their numbers, and, not discouraged by their former ill success, they had resolved once more, upon their own strength, to attempt the subversion of his government:

vernment: that, with this view, they had provided considerable sums of money, engaged great numbers of officers from abroad, secured large quantities of arms and ammunition, and thought themselves so well prepared, that, had not the plot been timely discovered, the whole nation, and particularly the city of London, would have been involved in blood and confusion: that, had he, since his accession to the throne, made any innovation in the established religion; had he, in any one instance, invaded the liberty and property of his subjects; he should the less wonder at any endeavours to alienate the affections of his people, and draw them into measures, which could end in nothing but their own destruction: but to endeavour to persuade a free people, in full enjoyment of all that was dear and valuable to them, to exchange freedom for slavery, the Protestant religion for Popery, and to sacrifice at once the price of so much blood and treasure, as had been spent in defence of the present establishment, seemed such a degree of infatuation, as could hardly be reconciled with sound reason or common sense: that, how vain and unsuccessful soever these desperate projects might prove in the end, they had, at present, so far produced the desired effect,

effect, as to create uneasiness and diffidence in the minds of his people; which his enemies endeavoured to improve to their own advantage: that, by forming plots, they first diminished the value of all property that was lodged in the public funds, and then complained of the low state of credit; they made an increase of the national expences necessary, and then clamoured at the burden of taxes, and endeavoured to impute to his government, as grievances, the mischiefs and calamities of which themselves alone were the occasion: that there was nothing he more earnestly desired, than to see the public expences lessened, and the great national debt put in a way of being gradually reduced and discharged, with a strict regard to parliamentary faith; and a more favourable opportunity could never have been expected, than the present profound peace, which the nation now enjoyed with all its neighbours; but public credit would always languish under daily alarms and apprehensions of danger; nor could it ever be fixed upon a solid and lasting foundation, till the cause of this national calamity was entirely removed: that he need not tell them, of what infinite consequence it was to the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom,

kingdom, that this parliament should, upon the present occasion, exert themselves with more than ordinary zeal and vigour: that an entire union among all, who sincerely wished well to the present establishment, was now become absolutely necessary; the enemies of the public had too long taken advantage of their differences and dissensions: but he hoped, they would now let it be known, that the spirit of Popery, which breathed nothing but destruction to the civil and religious rights of a Protestant church and kingdom, had not so far possessed his people, as to make them ripe for such a fatal change: he hoped they would let the world see, that the general disposition of the nation was no temptation to foreign enemies to invade it, nor any encouragement to domestic enemies to kindle a civil war in the bowels of their country: that their own interest and welfare called upon them to defend themselves; for his own part, he should wholly rely upon the divine protection, the support of his parliament, and the affections of his people, which he should endeavour to preserve by steadily adhering to the constitution in church and state, and continuing to make the laws of the realm the rule and measure of his actions.

Both

Both houses presented addresses expressing the highest indignation against the authors and abettors of the present conspiracy, and containing assurances, that they would cheerfully hazard their lives and fortunes in defence of his majesty's person and government.

End of the THIRTY-FOURTH VOLUME.



